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D. D.

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THE WORKS

OF

THOMAS JACKSON, D. D.

SOMETIME

PRESIDENT OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,

AND DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

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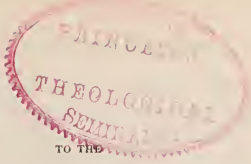
A TREATISE

OF THE

DIVINE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES.



TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND TRULY NOBLE

WILLIAM, EARL OF PEMBROKE,

LORD HIGH STEWARD OF HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD,
KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER,
AND
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXON.

The blessings of this life, and of the life to come, be multiplied.

HAD the consciousness of my weakness left any place for expectation that my poor labours should have found such benign acceptance with men of higher place and judgment, as by the report of honourable personages, and mine own late experience of your noble favours, some of them I now perceive have found with your honour, these present papers had come to crave your patronage in a better dress than now they do. Besides the consciousness of my inabilities to please the accurate judgments of this age, want of opportunities for these many years to give myself that contentment which I was once bold to promise unto myself, had almost deterred me from publishing any part of my former labours, which were not popular, and for the pulpit, of which rank this present treatise is not. The subject or matter of it is academical, and was conceived in that famous nursery of all good literature which for these many years had flourished, and many more may it flourish, under your honourable patronage. If either these or

other of my labours of the like argument, which took their first being from the benignity of that soil, may find acceptance with your Lordship, I shall need no other apology for publishing them beside my unfeigned desire to leave the Christian world a testimony of that high esteem which I have ever made of your honourable favours to that renowned university, and of my thankfulness for my particular interest in your general goodness. If this manifestation of my weakness may occasion other academics to shew their strength in this and like arguments, it shall be a great part of my joy and comfort to see better fruits of your Lordship's favour brought forth by others, than I can present unto you. But if these may find that acceptance which I most desire, your Lordship will haply be deemed by some to patronise not my weakness only, but mine errors. It is not so unusual nor so much for me to be censured for an Arminian, as it will be for your Lordship to be thought to patronise Arminianism. To give your Lordship that satisfaction therefore in this point, which I am not bound to give unto others; if the man which most mislikes the Arminian or Lutheran doctrine in the points most controverted through reformed churches, will but agree with me in these two, That the Almighty Creator hath a true freedom in doing good, and Adam's offspring a true freedom of doing evil; I shall not dissent from him in any other points controverted, unless it be in this one, that there needs to be no other controversy at all between the Arminians and their opposites in point of God's providence and predestination. In all other particulars, save only so far as they are reducible to these two, I have not yet the learning or understanding to conceive what contradiction there is or can be between men not willing

to contend about words. But if any in opposition to Arminius will maintain that all things were so decreed by God before the creation of the world, that nothing since the creation could have fallen out otherwise than it hath done, or that nothing can be amended what is amiss, I must crave pardon of every good Christian to oppugn his opinion, not as an error only in divinity, but as an ignorance which involveth enmity to the sweet disposition of the all-seeing and unerring Providence, as a forerunner of ruin to most flourishing states and kingdoms where it grows common, or comes to full height. For supplanting or preventing the growth of such opinions, I make bold to crave your Lordship's patronage. Thus with my continual prayers for your Lordship's health, with all increase of honour and happiness, I humbly take my leave.

Your Lordship's

in all duty and observance,

THO. JACKSON.

From my study in Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
Novemb. 20, 1627.

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A TREATISE

OF THE

DIVINE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES.

BOOK VI. PART I.

SECT. I.

Of the one absolutely infinite and incomprehensible Essence in general.

THE original of atheism, of errors or mispersuasions concerning the being or attributes of the Divine Nature, being in a former treatise at large discussed, the next inquiries which exact method would in this argument make, are, first, how this truth of God's being, most certainly known by internal experience unto some, may by force of speculative argument be made manifest unto others; secondly, how his nature and attributes may be fitliest resembled.

My first resolution, professed in the beginning of the discussing of the original of atheism, as yet re-
2 strains me for adventuring too far in the former. For whilst I view the progress which I have purposed, to debate this point upon my first entry into that paradise of contemplation (within whose territories I now encamp) by syllogistical force of argument, seemeth to me as great an oversight as to entertain an enemy, more desperate than potent, with a pitched battle, whenas all his forts might, by constant prosecution

of advantages gotten, be orderly taken, each after other, without possibility of any great loss or apparent danger. Now the atheist's chief strength lying in a preconceived impossibility of a creation and resurrection, the conquest of the whole truth will easily be compassed, after those weak holds be (as in due time they shall be) utterly demolished. Or in case after their overthrow he be of force to bid us battle, we shall be most willing to try our intended quarrel with him by dint of argument in the article of the last judgment. In the mean time we may, without danger of his check, proceed upon those advantages which the grounds of nature give us.

CHAP. I.

How far we may seek to express what by Light of Nature or otherways may be conceived concerning the incomprehensible Essence or his Attributes.

FIRST, if every particular man, or body generable, have precedent causes of their beings, their whole generations must of necessity have some cause; otherwise all should not be of one kind or nature. Now this progress from effects unto their causes, or betwixt causes subordinate, cannot be infinite; but as all progressive motion supposeth some rest or stay whence it proceedeth, so must this progress whereof I speak take beginning from some cause which hath no cause of its being. And this is that incomprehensible Essence which we seek.

2. But whereunto shall we liken Him? Things compared always agree in some one kind, or have (at least) a common measure. Is then this Cause of causes contained in any predicamental rank of being? or can our conceit of any thing therein contained be truly fitted unto him? or may his infinite and

incomprehensible nature be rightly moulded within the circumference of man's shallow brain? One thing it is to represent the infinite Essence, another to illustrate this truth, that He cannot be represented. Though nothing can exactly resemble Him, yet some things there be which better notify how far He is beyond all resemblance or comparison than others can do. By variety of such resemblances as his works afford, may our admiration of his incomprehensibleness be raised higher and higher, and with our admiration thus raised will our longing after his presence still be enlarged. The nature of things finite and limited no philosopher can so exactly express, as painters may their outward lineaments. But as some sensible objects, besides their proper shape or character, imprint a kind of dislike or pleasance in creatures sensitive; so have our purest and most exact conceits intellectual certain symptomatical impressions an-
3 nexed, which inwardly affect us, though we cannot outwardly so express them as they may imprint the like affection in others. Hence it is that the more right resemblances we make to ourselves of any thing, the greater will be the symptomatical impression of the latent truth; some part or shadow whereof appeareth in every thing whereto it can truly be compared. And though we cannot in this life come to a clear view of that nature which we most desire to see, yet is it a work worthy our pains to erect our thoughts by variety of resemblances (made with due observance of decorum) unto a horizon more ample than ordinary, in whose skirts or edges we may behold some scattered rays of that glorious light, which is utterly set unto men whose thoughts soar not without the circumference of this visible world; for all we see with our bodily eyes is but an hemi-

sphere of midnight darkness to the habitation of saints and seat of bliss.

3. The rule of decorum in all resemblances of things amiable or glorious is, that as well the simple terms of comparison be sightly and handsome, as the proportion between them exact. Supposing the odds of valorous strength between Ajax and ordinary Trojans to have been as great as Homer would have us believe it was; the manner of this champion's retreat, being overcharged with the multitude of his enemies, could not more exquisitely be resembled, than by a company of children driving an hungry hard-skinned ass with bats or staves out of a corn-field or meadow. The ass cannot by such weaklings be driven so hard, but he will feed as he goes; nor could Ajax be charged so fiercely by his impotent foes, but that he fought still as he fled. The proportion is approved as most exact by a teacher of poetry[a] that was his art's master, who notwithstanding with the same breath disallows the invention, as no way appliable unto Turnus, at least in the courtly censure of those times wherein Virgil wrote. Be the congruity between the terms never so exquisite or pleasant, the ass notwithstanding is no amiable creature, nor can wisdom or valour, for

[a] Nec dictis erit ullus honos, si cum actus ab urbe
Daunius hostili Teucris urgentibus heros,
Vix pugna absistit, similis dicetur Asello,
Quem pueri læto pascentem pinguia in agro
Ordea stipitibus duris detrudere tendunt,
Instantes, quatiuntque sudes per terga, per armos:
Ille autem campo vix cedere, et inter eundum
Sæpe hic atque illic avidis insistere malis:
Omnia conveniunt, rerumque simillima imago est.
Credo equidem, sed turpe pecus, nec Turnus Asellum,
Turnus avis atavisque potens dignabitur heros.
Aptius hanc speciem referat leo, quem neque terga
Ira dare, aut virtus patitur, neque sufficit unus
Tendere tot contra, telisque obstare sequentum.
Hieron. Vid. Poet. lib. 2.

his many base properties, willingly brook comparison with him in any. More fitly (as this author thinketh) might Turnus his heroical spirit have been paralleled by a lion, which though unable to sustain the fierce pursuit of many hunters, yet cannot be enforced to any other march than *passant gardant.*

4. But we must allow the poet (whose chief art is to please his reader's appetite with pleasant sauces more than with solid meats) to be more dainty and curious in this kind than it is requisite the school-divine or philosopher should be; albeit neither of them need much to fear lest their discourses be too comely, so solidity of truth be the ground of their comeliness. No courtly poet is more observant of the former rule of decorum in their comparisons than the holy prophets are. *Thus hath the Lord spoken unto me,* (saith Esaias, chap. xxxi. 4,) *Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself*
4 *for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.* St. Austin [b] hath noted three sorts of errors

[b] Et hic quidem omnium morbus est trium generum quæ proposui: et eorum scilicet qui secundum corpus de Deo sapiunt, et eorum qui secundum spiritualem creaturam sicuti est anima; et eorum qui neque, secundum corpus, neque secundum spiritualem creaturam, et tamen de Deo falsa existimant: eo remotiores a vero, quo id quod sapiunt, nec in corpore reperitur, nec in facto et condito spiritu, nec in ipso creatore. Qui enim opinatur Deum (verbi gratia) candidum vel rutilum, fallitur; sed tamen hæc inveniantur in corpore. Rursum, qui opinatur Deum nunc obliviscentem, nunc recordantem, vel si quid hujusmodi est: nihilominus in errore est: sed tamen hæc inveniuntur in animo. Qui autem putant ejus esse potentiæ Deum, ut seipsum ipse genuerit: eo plus errant, quod non solum Deus ita non est, sed nec spiritualis nec corporalis creatura. Nulla enim res omnino est, quæ seipsam gignat ut sit.—Aug. de Trinit. lib. 1. cap. 1.

in setting forth the Divine Nature; of which, two go upon false grounds, the other is altogether groundless. Some, saith he, there be that seek to measure things spiritual by the best knowledge which they have gotten (by sense or art) of things bodily. Others do fit the Deity with the nature and properties of the human soul, and from this false ground frame many deceitful and crooked rules, whilst they endeavour to draw the picture or image of the immutable Essence. A third sort there be, which by too much straining to transcend every mutable creature, patch up such conceits, as cannot possibly hang together, either upon created or increated natures, and these rove further from the truth than do the former. As, to use his instance, he which thinks God to be bright or yellow is much deceived; yet his error wants not a cloak, inasmuch as these colours have some being, from God, in bodies. His error again is as great, that thinks God sometimes forgets and sometimes calls things forgotten to mind; yet this vicissitude of memory and oblivion hath place in the human soul, which in many things is like the Creator. But he which makes the Divine Nature so powerful as to produce or beget itself, quite misseth not the mark only, but the butt, and shoots, as it were, out of the field: for nothing possible can possibly give itself being or existence.

5. But though in nowise we may avouch such gross impossibilities of Him, to whom nothing is impossible; yet must we often use fictions or suppositions of things scarce possible, to last so long till we have moulded conceits of the Essence and Attributes incomprehensible more lively and semblable than can be taken either from the human soul alone, or from bodies natural. To maintain it as a philosophical truth, that "God is the soul of this universe,"

is an impious error, before condemned as a grand seminary of idolatry. Yet by imagining the human soul to be as really existent in every place whereto the cogitations of it can reach as it is in our bodies, or rather to exercise the same motive power over the greatest bodily substance in this world that it doth over our fingers, able to wield the heavens or elements with as great facility and speed as we do our thoughts or breath; we may, by this fiction, gain a more true model or shadow of God's infinite efficacy, than any one created substance can furnish us withal. But whilst we thus, by imagination, transfuse our conceits of the best life and motion which we know into this great sphere which we see, or (which suit better to the immutable and infinite Essence) into bodies abstract or mathematical; we must make such a compound as Tacitus would have made of two noble Romans, *Demptis utriusque vitiis solæ virtutes misceantur:* "The imperfections of both being sifted from them, their perfections only must be ingredients in this compound." Yet may we not think that the Divine Nature, which we seek to express by them, consists of perfections infinite, so united or compounded. We must yet use a further extraction of our conceits, ere we apply them to his incomprehensible nature.

CHAP. II.

Containing two philosophical Maxims which lead us to the Acknowledgment of one infinite and incomprehensible Essence.

UNTO every student that with observance ordinary will survey any philosophical tract of causes, two main springs or fountains do in a manner discover themselves; which were they as well opened and drawn as

some others of less consequence are, we might baptize most atheists in the one, and confirm good Christians in the other. The natural current of the one directly carries us to an independent Cause; from whose illimited essence and nature the latter affords us an ocular or visible derivation of those general attributes whereof faith infused giveth us the true taste and relish. The former we may draw to this head—"Whatsoever hath limits or bounds of being hath some distinct cause or author of being." As impossible it is any thing should take limits of being as beginning of being from itself. For beginning of being is one especial limit of being.

2. This maxim is simply convertible, "Whatsoever hath cause of being hath also limits of being," because it hath beginning of being: for *Omnis causa est principium, et omne causatum est principiatum:* Every cause is the active beginning or beginner of being, and an active beginning essentially includes a beginning passive, as fashionable to it as the mark or impression is to the stamp. Or in plainer English thus: "Where there is a beginning or beginner, there is somewhat begun." Where the cause is preexistent in time, the distinction or limits of things caused or begun are as easily seen as the divers surfaces of bodies severed in place. But where the cause hath only precedence of nature and not of time, (as it falleth out in things caused by concomitance or resultance,) the limits or confines of their being seem confounded, or as hardly distinguishable as the divers surfaces of two bodies glued together. Yet as we rightly gather, that if the bodies be of several kinds each hath its proper surface, though the point of distinction be invisible to our eyes; so whatsoever we conceive to have dependence upon another, we neces-

sarily conceive it to have proper limits of being, or at least a distinct beginning of being from the other, though as it were ingrafted in it. But whether we conceive effects and causes distinctly as they are in nature, or in gross, so long as we acknowledge them (this or that way conceived) to be finite and limited, we must acknowledge some cause of their limitation, which (as we suppose) cannot be distinct from the cause of their being.

3. Why men in these days are not giants, why giants in former were but men, are two problems which the mere naturalist could easily assoil by this reason, for substance one and the same: The vigour of causes productive or conservative of vegetables, of man especially, from which he receiveth nutrition and augmentation, is less now than it hath been at least before the flood, though but finite and limited when it was greatest. Why vegetables of greatest vigour engross not the properties of others less vigorous, but rest contented with a greater numerical mea-
6 sure of their own specifical virtues, is by the former reason as plain. For in that they have not their being from themselves they can take no more than is given, nor can the natures whence they are propagated convey them a better title of being than themselves have. Thus as the seal communicates his fashion to the wax, so doth the limited force or virtue of causes always imprint bounds and limits upon their effects. If further it be demanded why the elements, having the opportunity of mutual vicinity to wreak their natural enmities or hostilities, do not each trespass more grievously upon other; as, why the restless or raging water swallows not up the dull earth, which cannot fly from any wrong or violence offered; or why the heavens, having so great a pre-

rogative by height of place, largeness of compass, and indefatigable motion, do not dispossess the higher elements of their seat; the naturalist would plead the warrant of nature's charter, which had set them their distinct bounds and limits by an everlasting undispensable law. Yet is nature, in his language, always an internal or essential part of some bodies, within which it is necessarily confined. As the nature of the heavens hath not so much as liberty of egress into neighbour elements, nor the proper forms of these (upon what exigence or assaults soever made against them in their territories) so much as right of removal or flitting into lower elements. Or in case it be pretended that these particular natures have a nature more general for their president, yet this, whether one above the rest, or an aggregation only of all the rest, is still confined to this visible world, and both so hidebound with the utmost sphere, that they cannot grow greater or enlarge their strength. So that nature, taken in what sense the naturalist lists, cannot be said so properly to set bounds or limits to bodies natural, as to be bounded or limited in them. Or to speak more properly, nature herself did not make, but is that very domestic law by which they are bounded, and therefore, in no case, can dispense with it. And in that she is a law, (for the most part, but not absolutely, indispensable,) she necessarily supposeth a lawgiver, who, if he have no law set him by any superior, (as we must of necessity come in fine to some one in this kind supreme,) he can have no such limits or bounds as he hath set to nature and things natural. He neither is any part of this visible frame which we see, nor can he be enclosed within the utmost sphere. And thus, by following the issue of the former fountain, we are arrived in the latter,

which, fully discovered, opens itself into a boundless ocean: "Whatsoever hath no cause of being can have no limits or bounds of being."

4. And being may be limited or illimited two ways; either for number of kinds and natures contained in it, or for quantity and intensive perfection of every several kind. Of things visible, we see the most perfect are but perfect in some one kind, they possess not the entire perfection of others; and that perfection whereof they have the just propriety is not actually infinite, but finite and limited. Whatsoever thus is, it was as possible for it not to have been, and is as possible for it not to be, as to be but of this or that kind, not all that is or hath being. Even those substances which we call immortal, as the heaven of heavens, with all their inhabitants, be they angels or archangels, principalities or thrones, enjoy the perpetual tenor of their actual existence, not from their essence, but from the decree of their Maker. *Manent cuncta non quia æterna sunt, sed quia defenduntur cura regentis. Immortalia tutore non egent. Hæc conservat artifex, fragilitatem materiæ vi sua vincens,* Seneca, Epist. 58. "All things continue in being, not because they are eternal, but because they are defended by the providence of their Governor. Things immortal need no guardian or protector: but the Maker of all things preserveth these things" (which we see continue in being), "overmatching the frailty of the matter by his power." In this man's philosophy nothing which is made can be by nature immortal, though many things be perpetually preserved from perishing. Nothing which is immortal can be made. He grossly erred if he were of the same opinion with some others of the ancient[c], that God had a

[c] Mittamus animum ad illa quæ æterna sunt. Miremur in

desire to make things immortal, but could not, by reason of the frailty or untowardliness of the matter. But that things made out of the matter, or made at all, could not be immortal by nature, he rightly affirmed: for to be immortal, in his language, is to be without beginning, without dependence: and what so is, hath an eternal necessity of existence. Absolute necessity of existence, or impossibility of non-existence, or of not being always what it is and as it is, implies an absolute necessity of being or of existence infinite; which cannot reside save only in the totality or absolute fulness of all being possible. The greatest fulness of finite existence conceivable cannot reach beyond all possibility of non-existence, nor can possibility of non-existence and perpetual actual existence be indissolubly wedded in any finite nature, save only by His infinite power who essentially is, or whose essence is to exist, or to be the inexhaustible fountain of all being. The necessary supposal or acknowledgment of such an infinite or essentially existent power cannot more strongly or more perspicuously be inferred, than by the reduction of known effects unto their causes, and of these causative entities (whose number and ranks are finite) into one prime essence, whence all of them are derived, itself being underivable from any cause or essence conceivable. In that this prime essence hath no cause of being, it can have no begin-

sublimi volitantes rerum omnium formas, Deumque inter illa versantem, et providentem, quemadmodum quæ immortalia facere non potuit, quia materia prohibebat, defendat a morte, ac ratione vitium corporis vincat.—Seneca, ib. Whether for thus saying he fall under the censure of Muretus in his annotations upon this place, I refer it to the judicious reader. Impie stulta veterum opinio, Deum voluisse quidem a primo omnia immortalia facere, sed non potuisse, propter materiæ vitium. Quasi non, ut cætera omnia, ita materiam condiderit, ac procrearit Deus. Recte Lactantius, Idem materiæ fictor est, qui et rerum materia constantium.

ning of being: and yet is beginning of being the first and prime limit of being, without whose precedence other bounds or limits of being cannot follow.

5. If that which philosophers suppose to be the root of incorruption in the heavens can brook no limits of duration, but must be imagined without end or beginning, why should it content itself with limits of extension; seeing duration is but a kind of extension, seeing motion, magnitude, and time, by their rules in other cases, hold exact proportion? Things caused (as induction manifesteth) are always limited and moulded in their proper causes; nor are there two causes, (much less two causalities,) one of their being, another of their limitation or restraint to this or that set kind of being. For whatsoever gives being to any thing, gives it the beginning of being: as Sophroniscus was the true cause why Socrates was in that age wherein he lived, not before or after; why he was a man not a beast; an Athenian, not a barbarian. *Quicquid dat formam, dat omnia consequentia formam,* "Whatsoever gives form of being to any thing, gives all the appurtenances to the form," is a physical maxim which supposeth another metaphysical, *Quicquid dat esse, dat proprietates esse;* "That which gives being unto any thing, gives likewise the
8 properties of such being as it hath." Now limits of being are essential properties of that essence or being wherein they are found; and distinct bounds or limits are included in the distinct form of being which every thing hath from its cause. Actual essence, or existence itself, is distributed to every thing that hath cause of being, as it were sealed up in its proper form or kind of being. It is as possible to put a new fashion upon nothing, as for any thing that is to take limits or set form of being from nothing. That which

hath nothing to give it being, can have nothing to give it limits or bounds of being. And as no entity can take its being, or beginning of being, from itself, so neither can it take bounds or limits from itself, but must have them from some other. The prime Essence, or first Cause of all things that are, as it hath no precedent cause of existence, nor can it be cause of existence to itself, so neither can it have any cause of limits without itself, nor can it be any cause of limits to itself. It remains then, that it must be an essence illimited; and thus to be without bounds or limits is the formal effect or consequence of being itself, or of that which truly is, without any cause precedent to give it being, or make it what it is.

6. So essentially is the conceit of being without bounds or limits included in our conceit of being without cause precedent, that if we should by way of supposition give any imaginary entity leave to take beginning or possession of being from itself, without the warrant of any cause precedent to appoint or measure it out some distinct portion or form of being, thus much being once by imagination granted, we could not (by any imagination possible) debar this entity from absolute necessity of being for ever after whatsoever it listed to be, or from being all things rather than any one thing.

Of the heathens, many did hold an uncreated chaos preexistent to the frame of this universe; and philosophers to this day maintain an ingenerable matter, which actually is not any body, but indifferent to be made every body. Let us but suppose, first, the one or other of them to be as homogeneal in itself as the air or water; secondly, to be able to actuate, or, Proteus-like, to transform itself into a better state than now it hath, without the help of any agent or

efficient; and then, as it could have no cause, so can there be no reason given, to restrain it from taking all bodily perfection possible to itself. And if it be true, which some teach, that this prime matter hath neither proper quantity nor quality, what should hinder it to take both without measure, supposing it might be its own carver of those endowments? Or imagine there were such a vacuity where the world now is, as we Christians believe there was before it was made, and only one of Democritus' casual atoms, or some mere possibility or appetite of the matter left free, *venire in vacuum*, to give itself full and perfect act without curb or restraint of any superior power or sharer to cry "Half mine" with it, or make claim to the nature of any actual entity lost; it being supposed to be able to take any one nature upon it, what should either hinder or further it to assume the nature of earth rather than of water, or of these two rather than of any other element, or of any simple bodies rather than of mixed or compounded substance, or of bodily substances rather than spiritual, or of all these rather than of their metaphysical eminences and perfections? Or whilst we imagine it without cause of existence or beginning, no reason imaginable could confine it to any set place of residence or extension;
9 no cause could be alleged why it should take possession of the centre rather than of the circumference of this universe, as now it stands, or of both these rather than of the whole sphere, or of the whole sphere rather than of all extensive space imaginable. Only the very supposition of taking beginning, though without cause, doth put a limit to its duration; because this kind of beginning, being but imaginary, depends upon our imagination as upon its true cause. And yet, even thus considered, methinks it should extend its exist-

ence both ways, and draw a circular duration to the instant where it begins. Or (not imagining the beginning) let us imagine it only to have true present being without any cause precedent to push it forward, or superior guide to appoint it a set course; and it is not within the compass of imagination why the duration of it should not reach as far the one way as the other; as far beyond all imagination of time past as of time to come; why it should not comprehend all duration imaginable by way of present possession or supereminent permanency, without admission of any deflux, division, or succession, for continuation of its existence.

7. If it be objected, that any thing may follow from supposition or imagination of impossibilities, the reply is easy: The objection is either false or true in a sense which no way impeacheth, but rather approves that kind of arguing. True it is, there is almost nothing in nature so impossible, as it may not be the possible consequent of some impossibility supposed or granted; but of every particular impossibility supposed or imagined, the possible[d] consequences are not infinite, neither such nor so many as we list to make them; they are determinate by nature. Now we

[d] Qui scholas regunt, jam id nobis exploratum reliquerunt: talem esse conditionalis propositionis naturam sive conditionem, ut existente falso quod antecedit, et etiam quod subsequitur, possit remanere vera conditionalis.—Pasq. c. 1. ad Rom. fol. 65. Though it were impossible for an angel from heaven to preach any other gospel than Paul had preached, and impossible likewise for any angel of heaven to be accursed, yet St. Paul's conditional proposition was true; If an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, he should be accursed. In like manner this supposition or conditional, If any thing could take beginning from itself, it should be infinite, is true; although both these positions be false; first, that any thing can take beginning from itself; secondly, that any thing which hath beginning can be infinite. And this only is absolutely true, That which truly is without all beginning, is absolutely infinite.

cannot conceive it to be in nature more impossible for a mere logical possibility really and truly to take beginning of actual being only from itself, than it is for that which is supposed and imagined thus to take beginning, to be restrained either to any determinate kind or part of being, or to be confined to any set place or residence. Or, if any mislike these imaginary models, let him (now he hath given us leave to make them, and vouchsafed to look upon them) utterly cancel or deface them. The everlasting edifice to whose direction they are destinated is this: "Such as we cannot conceive that not to be, which we conceive to take beginning of being from itself without any cause precedent; such of necessity must we conceive and believe Him to be indeed, who neither took beginning from himself, nor had it given by any, but is the beginning of being, the sole Maker of all things that be, being himself without beginning, without dependence of any cause, without subordination to any guide, to appoint his kind, to limit his place, or prescribe his time of being." He is in all these, and whatsoever branch or portion of being imaginable, truly and really infinite, the quintessence or excellency of all perfections (whether numerical or specifical) incident to all sorts or degrees of beings numerable.

CHAP. III.

Of Infinity in Being, or of absolute Infinity; and the right Definition of it by the ancient Philosophers.

1. WERE the question proposed in formal terms, *An inter nihil et aliquid detur medium*, "Whether something or nothing may admit a mean or middle nature;" few answerers in the schools would make choice of the affirmative; if any did, he might easily be thus opposed: Every mean betwixt two is either

by participation of both extremes, (as lukewarm is neither hot nor cold, but a mixture of both,) or a mean by abnegation, as being capable of neither. So a stone, though it be not blind, yet cannot see, and is therefore such a mean as we now speak of, i. e. *medium abnegationis*, betwixt sight and blindness. That which is not (so is nothing) can communicate no kind of being (for it hath none) unto any thing; therefore it is impossible there should be any mean of participation betwixt nothing and something. And to find a mean betwixt them by abnegation, that is, any thing which is neither something nor nothing, is as hard as to assign a space or vacancy between a line and the point that terminates it. What name soever we propose, unless it have some degree or portion of entity answering to it, we may justly say, it is just nothing. These reasons notwithstanding, though they firmly hold in secular disputes of predicamental or numerable entities, yet the infinite Essence comes not within the lists of this division. Is he then a mean between something and nothing? rather an excellency too transcendent to be comprehended under the name of something, or of any thing, for this were to make him a numerable part of being[e]. On the other side, we should avouch as much under our hand as the fool said in his heart, if we did comprehend him under the other extreme. To say there is no God, or

[e] Idem absolutum, quod et Deum dicimus, non cadit in numero cum omni alio, ut quod Deus et cœlum, sint plura, aut duo, aut alia, et diversa; sicut nec cœlum est idem absolutum, ut cœlum quod est aliud a terra. Et quia idem absolutum est actu omnis formæ formabilis forma, non potest forma esse extra idem. Quo enim res est eadem sibi ipsi, forma agit, quod autem est alteri alias est, quia non est idem absolutum, hoc est omnis formæ forma. Est igitur idem absolutum, principium, medium, et finis, omnis formæ et actus absolutus omnis potentiæ.—Cusan. de Genes. dialog. pag. 128.

that God is nothing, are speeches altogether equivalent; both equally false, and alike blasphemous. Fully contradictory to their falsehood, and in direct opposition to their blasphemy, we may more safely say and think, that God is one, yet no one thing. And if we avouch him to be all, our meaning is, he is a great deal more than all things. The Latin *ens*, which, universally taken, directly answers to our English "every thing," or "any thing;" (as Mirandula[f] well observes,) *faciem concreti habet*, "it bears the face or image of a concrete." And every concrete takes its name from that nature whereof it participates; which nature notwithstanding, by reason of its simple, pure, and perfect essence, cannot brook the same name which it bestows on others. Nothing is truly termed *hot* or *white* but from participation of *heat* or *whiteness;* yet to say *heat* is *hot*, or *whiteness white*, is a speech as improper and unnatural, as it would be to style the king's majesty, *lord president, chief justice of some court*, or with some other inferior title merely dependent on supreme majesty. Heat then is that from which things are called, as by participation of it they truly are hot; whiteness, that from whose participation things are termed white. Thus shall we speak of God, so we speak of him as best befits his supreme majesty, that he is no one thing, but rather one from whose most pure and perfect being all things are said to be what they are. That man is one thing and
11 the earth another, that any thing is said to be what it is, includes a participation of His being whose proper name is *I am*[g], whose essence is the very quintessence, the incomprehensible and indiminishable fulness of that, without which we can neither affirm or deny aught of that which is τὸ εἶναι, the only foundation

[f] Lib. de ente et uno. [g] Exod. iii. 14.

of every thing that can be named alone, the only bond of all things that can be combined or linked together. Say[h] we then not only that He is one, but that He only is; and that in Him the eminent totality or perfection of every thing to whom this title *Is* can be imparted, is contained. Angels and immortal spirits are, but they are not being itself; that is, they are what they are by participation of his essence who only is, who alone comprehends all things.

2. Of the greatest angel which he hath created, or of the most noble intelligent spirit which the philosophers imagined, were he present, or did we know the place of his residence, we might without wrong say, "This angel," or "Yonder intelligence;" or speak of either as of a numerable part, though a principal one, of this universe. For though his nature be much more perfect than ours is, and he, according to the perfection of his nature, much more excellent than his fellow angels are; his perfections nevertheless have their bounds and limits, not uncapable of these demonstrative signs, *this*, *here*, or *yonder*, &c. He neither contains the specifical perfection of our nature nor the numerical of his fellows', within the measure of his perfection. In his kind then he is most perfect, yet is he not that perfection which he hath in him, but the receptacle of it; and if he have perfection only in him, without being himself perfection, *quid habet quod non accepit?* all he hath must be participated or borrowed from perfection itself. And of his borrowed perfections one neither properly is another, nor are all or any

[h] Cum primum ingressus academiam fueris, occurret tibi Parmenides, qui unicum demonstrabit Deum esse rerum omnium ideas, id est, exemplaria rationesque eminentissime continentem vel producentem. Occurret Melissus et Zeno, qui solum Deum revera esse demonstrent, cætera vero videri.—Marsil. Ficin. Epist. 8. pag. 866.

of them what he is. His power is not the same that his wisdom is; his wisdom is not his goodness; nor goodness his life. Satan and his angels have life, though they have lost their goodness; and their power to practise is less than their wit to plot mischief and villainy. The best, the wisest, or mightiest of those immortal spirits which kept their stations, is not able, either by his mere power to give being to things that are not, or life to lifeless creatures; his wisdom cannot inspire wisdom into creatures indued with life; his goodness is no fountain whence grace may be derived into the heart of man. But when we say God is one, or God only is, in this indivisible unity we include all multiplicity. Nor can we say more of him in fewer words than Seneca hath done: *Est totum quod vides, et totum quod non vides:* "He is the absolute totality of all and every part of being or perfection, which we see in things visible, or conceive in substances invisible."

3. By the same analogy of speech that we say a statue or picture, though made after life, is no true man, we are bound to say and think that no creature (the best of which is but the image of God, his being, at the best, but participated) truly is: it is their chief grace to be true shadows of true being. Or as it is usual with divines to enstyle Christ *the true Samuel—David himself—the right Solomon—the only Samson;* not that they think the stories of those men's lives were only feigned legends for good example, (or that no such persons had ever truly been,) but because they did foreshadow one far more excellent than themselves, in whom that was really and fully exhibited which was only prefigured in
12 them: so we say God alone is, because the totality and fulness of that being is in him, whose representa-

tion is in his creatures. Thus much is included in all those sacred passages wherein he saith of himself, *I am he—I am God, and there is none besides;* thus much many comments yet extant in the ancient philosophy of the heathens, being compared with these texts, would fully inform us.

4. The Stoics appropriate the name of *essence* unto God, and unto the matter which they foolishly conceive to be coeternal with him, able to overmatch the benignity of his active power by its passive untowardliness[i]. However, they held nothing worthy the title of essence which was not αὐτογένες, "independently, everlastingly." Plotin's philosophy was more divine, unless perhaps he gave too much to his demoniacal or angelical spirits; as many others, not conceiving any creation but out of the matter preexistent, seem to allot a kind of independent being to immaterial substances. An error easy to have been checked, had the favourers of it been put in mind that these their demigods, by necessary consequence of this opinion, must have been acknowledged infinite in being. Whereas the true notion of such infinity, by the apparent grounds of true philosophy, is only proper, only possible unto one; because it entirely includeth all that can be, and *all* absolutely excludes all plurality. From this principle rightly sounded did Plato deny things sensible truly to be, or (as Seneca paraphrases upon his text) they make a show only, or put on a countenance of being for a time, being uncapable of the stability or solidity of true being. So far was this divine philosopher from their heresy which acknowledged an independent being in immaterial substances, that (to the Aristotelical Christian's shame[k]) he de-

[i] Vide Senecam Epist. 58, et Muretum in Annot.

[k] Ubi diis a se factis promisit Deus non factus immortalitatem;

rives their immortality, not from the immateriality or excellency of their nature, but from the special grant or charter of their Maker; as if dissolution or final expiration were due to them as they are creatures; albeit the execution of it were everlastingly deferred from their first creation. These terms of *being*, *is*, or *are*, &c., which are so common to all things, that without them we can neither make inquiry after any thing, nor distinguish it from nothing, are attributed by the same philosopher to this eternal Maker of all things after such an eminent and sovereign manner as may not be communicated to any other. So the name of poet, (to use Seneca's[1] comment upon Plato's

quod impossibile est, se dixit esse facturum. Sic enim eum locutum narrat Plato, &c. vide Aug. lib. 22. de Civit. Dei, cap. 26. Et Scotum in 4. senten. distin. 43. q. 1. art. 2. Et Platonem ipsum in Timeo. p. 41.

[1] Secundum ex his quæ sunt, ponit Plato, quod eminet et exuperat omnia. Hoc ait per excellentiam esse, ut poeta communiter dicitur: omnibus enim versus facientibus hoc nomen est: sed jam apud Græcos in unius notam cessit. Homerum intelligas cum audieris Poetam. Quid ergo hoc est? Deus scilicet major ac potentior cunctis. —Seneca, Ep. 58. Quid per ideas intelligat.—Plato, vide ib. Et apud Muretum in Annotat. *Jehovah*. This is the chiefest name of the eternal and most blessed God, so called of his essence, being, or existence, which is simply *one*, Deut. vi. 4. The force of this name the Holy Ghost openeth, *He that is, that was, and that will be, or is to come*, Rev. i. 4, 8; iv. 8; xi. 17; xvi. 5. And the form of the Hebrew name implieth so much, *Je* being a sign of the time to come, *Jeheveh*, he will be; *Ho*, of the time present, *Hoveh*, he that is; and *Vah*, of the time past, *Havah*, he was. It importeth that God is, and hath his being of himself from before all worlds, Isaiah xliv. 6: that he giveth being or existence unto all things, and in him all are and do consist, Acts xvii. 25: that he giveth being unto his word, effecting whatsoever he hath spoken, whether promises, (Exod. vi. 3. Esay xlv. 2, 3.) or threatenings, (Ezek. v. 17; vii. 27.) It is in effect the same that *Ehieh*, *I will be*, or *I am*, as God calleth himself, Exod. iii. 14. Of this the Gentiles named the greatest God *Jove* and *Jupiter*, that is, *Jah*-Father, of the shorter name *Jah*, mentioned Psalm lxviii. 4. And Varro, the learnedest of the Romans, thought Jove to be the God of the Jews.—August. lib. 1. de Consen. Evan. cap. 22. §. 30. Hereof also in Greek writers he is called *Jao*. Diodor. Sicul.

dialect,) absolutely or demonstratively taken, was Homer's peculiar title throughout Greece; albeit the name of poet was common in that time to all versifiers. *The poet Homer* was a tautology amongst the Grecians, but *poet Æschylus* or *poet Euripides* none. A greater tautology or solecism it had been in Plato's divinity to have said of God, as we do of ourselves 13
or of angels, He is something, every thing, or the most excellent thing. Enough it was to have said, He is one, or He is all, although he should have hit his or the ancient philosopher's meaning best that had said, He is ὁ ὤν, *He that is;* or as the apostle comments upon God's name revealed to Moses, *He which was, is, and which is to come,* ὁ παντο-κράτωρ.

5. Parmenides, much more ancient than Plato, did not deny (unless Simplicius, one of Aristotle's followers double with us) all distinction, either numerical or specifical, or more general, between the visible or intelligible parts of this universe. Any member of which division being granted, multitude and division would necessarily follow. But how many or great soever the parts of multitude were in his opinion, they truly were not in respect of that unity whence they had their original. That speech of this sage philosopher, *Omnia unum sunt*, which Aristotle, in the first entry into his new philosophy, stumbles at as a paradox, was an orthodoxal principle of true divinity. Parmenides meant the same that Plato did, perhaps better, although he expressed his meaning in a poetical

lib. 3. cap. 60. Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. 5. Macrob. lib. 1. Saturnal. cap. 18. But in the Greek tongue the name *Jehovah* cannot rightly be pronounced, and for it the Greek Bibles have *Lord*, which the New Testament followeth, as Mark xii. 29, from Deut. vi. 4, and elsewhere usually; and the Hebrew text sometime putteth *Adonai*, Lord, or *Elohim*, God, for *Jehovah*, as Psalm lvii. 10, compared with Psalm cviii. 4; 2 Chron. xxv. 24, with 2 Kings xiv. 14.—Ainsworth upon Psalm lxxxiii. 19.

manner, more apt to be mistaken, though, rightly taken, more magnificent, and much apter to occasion admiration. The speech itself will naturally bear this construction: Multitude of things visible is but the multiplied shadow of invisible independent unity: things sensible, or by imagination numerable, are but so many several representations of his incomprehensible being, who is one, not as one is part of multitude, yet most truly one, because indivisible and unmultipliable, as wanting nothing, as most entirely possessing all that can accrue by multiplication; most truly one, because He only is; and unto his being naught can be added, naught detracted from it, by the increase or diminution of other beings. Or in Parmenides' meaning, He so is, that if all things numerable should lose that being which they have, or be annihilated, all might be found again in Him, and be restored with Job's restitution to their wonted estate, without diminution of his sovereign being. For whatsoever now is, heretofore hath been, or can be extant, besides Him, hath a more excellent manner of being treasured up in his eternal and infinite essence, than may with safety be committed to its own charge or custody.

6. Happy had it been for Aristotle himself, and not amiss for us, if he had employed his extraordinary talent of wit in setting forth that infinite treasure of wisdom whence he received it, or spent his days in contemplation of that Unity whence all things whereof he wrote had their beginning, rather than in deciphering their several natures and perfections, altogether omitting the essential references or dependencies which they had from Him: unless this mirror of nature had been of their number, who, infatuated, as the Apostle speaks by divine wisdom, became vain

in their imaginations, he might have perceived his own definition of such infinity as he imagined in the divisibility of magnitude or succession of time, to have been, as Plato speaks of time itself, but a moveable image of that true and solid infinity, whose definition, being well assigned by others, was censoriously 14
rejected by him; or such a floating shadow of it swimming in his brain, as the sun or stars imprint in a swift running stream. A perfect definition should be so fitted to the entire nature of the thing defined, or to the thing itself absolutely considered, as the bark is to the tree, or other visible surfaces to the bodies which they environ: to express some particular properties or branches, much less some references or considerations of it, is not enough. The question then being absolutely proposed, *Quid infinitum est?* "What is infinity?" or, "What is it to be infinite?" the definitive and satisfactory answer must be such as shall express, not the nature of infinity in succession only, or in division, not in this or that respect only, or according to some particular abstraction or consideration; but the nature of infinity simply and absolutely considered. That only is absolutely and properly infinite, which is infinite, not according to one conceit or kind of infinity, but that which is infinite in being. This was that infinity which the ancients well defined when they said, *Infinitum est extra quod nihil est:* "Infinity is that without which nothing is or can be." For as infinity in longitude includes all length conceivable, and infinity in solid magnitudes, all dimensions imaginable; so must infinite being include all being possible; and it is impossible for any thing to be without or besides that wherein all being possible is contained. Thus did these ancient heathens *feel after and seek*, and in a

manner find, *that Lord* under the notion of *unum* and *infinitum, in whom,* as St. Paul saith, (Acts xvii. 28,) *we live, and move, and have our being.* His words will bear or rather presuppose that improvement which is necessarily included in the ancients' definition of absolute infinity: "It is impossible that any thing living should have life, that any thing moveable should move, that life or motion should have the least degree of being, save only in Him, who only is:" for as the same Apostle there saith, ver. 25, *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;* the very first beginnings, the first and last degrees of such being as they have. Aristotle then came far short of the truth in saying, *Infinitum est extra quod semper aliquid est,* "That is infinite, which never hath so much, but it is always getting more." The truth is, Aristotle did not, could not deny the definition assigned by the ancients to be a true and perfect definition of absolute infinity, or of infinity in being. Wherein then, or upon what grounds, did he dissent from them? Either in that he did not acknowledge any such absolute infinity or infinite being as the ancients believed, or else did suppose that they held this visible world, or some bodily magnitude, to be so actually and absolutely infinite as the former definition doth import. Concerning this latter sort of infinity, whatsoever the ancient philosophers did, we Christians do not dissent from Aristotle; for we deny any bodily magnitude actually infinite. But that there is an absolute infinity, or an essence actually and absolutely infinite, may be necessarily inferred from those branches of that infinity which consists not in act, but in possibility, or succession, which Aristotle rightly acknowledged and well defined. For whence should all the parts of this visible world

possibly get any new portion of time, any succession or addition to their present being or duration, which now they have not; save only from his infinite and inexhaustible store, who, before all times, had so much of being in every kind, as he could not possibly either get any more, or lose a drachm of what he had; albeit through every moment of duration divisible he furnished all things that are (as he could do more) with as much perfection as they are capable of, that is, all of them with perfection or being in itself finite, but in some of them without limit of duration. But are all things in him? or such only as include perfection? Or shall we say perfections are in him, rather than in the things themselves? And if so, whether shall we say he is one perfection, or all perfections?

CHAP. IV.

There is no Plurality of Perfections in the Infinite Essence, albeit the Perfection of all Things be in Him. Of the absolute Identity of the Divine Essence and Attributes.

1. He argued like himself that said, We must either allow the gods to have bodies, or deny them sense; because sense is never found without a body. What was it then in his philosophy which framed the organs of bodily sense? a body already organized and endued with sense? or a spirit, (*virtus formatrix*,) which rather is in the body, than is a body itself? And if this spirit frame the organs by its own skill, Epicurus should in reason have afforded it both sense and reason in greater measure than he had himself; who, out of the same matter, could not make so much as one hair white or black, much less the most exquisite instruments of sense. But if this spirit, by which, in philosophers' opinions, our bodies are produced, work

not by art, but is only set on work by the Supreme Artificer; seeing he can make it to do more without sense and reason than Epicurus could do by all his art or philosophical skill, we must needs grant sense (and reason) to be in him; yet such, or in such a sort, as befits his majesty, not such as [m]Epicurus took delight in. Our argument is grounded on the psalmist's philosophy: *Understand, ye brutish among the people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?* Psalm xciv. 8, 9, 10. Yet as we say that he only is, and all things numerable are but mere shadows of his being; so we must hold, that hearing, sight, and reason are in him according to their ideal patterns or perfections, not according to those imperfect pictures, which, communicated to men and beasts, distinguish them from vegetables or lifeless creatures; whose perfections likewise are in him. But some things perhaps there be, which have no portion of perfection, as the prime matter, or some like dead or dull mass. For how shall that which is but a body be in him that hath no body? That maxim, *Idem est non esse, et non apparere,* is not so true in matters of civil proof or allegation, as the other stem of the same root, *Idem est non esse, et non operari,* is in nature. To be without efficacy or operation, or to serve unto no use, is all one as not to be at all. Or, rather, so to be hath the same proportion to simple non-being as *nihil agere* to *otiosum esse.* To be without use or operation is more remote from true being, and worse in nature, than simply not to be. If any such things

[m] Vide Lactant. lib. 1. de Ira Dei: et Betuleum in com.

there be, how should we say they are in God, in whom is nothing but perfection? Yet of things without proper use or operation, there might be some peculiar end best known to their Maker; if it were but to commend the perfection which other creatures borrow from him, and to stir up our thankfulness, that we neither are such dull masses ourselves, nor are troubled with harbouring or supporting them. But even these, if any such there were, could not be existent, or *extra causas*, unless they truly were in him. What is it then for all things that are, or their perfections, to be in him?

2. For all things to be in him, is no more than that he alone can produce them without seed or matter precedent. All things, not extant only, but possible, are in his wisdom, as the edifice is in the artificer's head; all things again are in his power, as strength or force to move our limbs is in our sinews or motive-faculty. The perfections of all things are truly said to be in him, inasmuch as whatsoever is or can be done by their efficacy or virtue, he alone can do without them. He could feed all the beasts of the field without grass, heal every disease without herb, metal, or other matter of medicine, by his sole word, not uttered by breathing, or any other kind of motion; not distinct from his life or essence. He is life itself; yet is not his life supported by any corporeal mass, or pre-existent nature, nor clothed with such sense as ours is: for sense, inasmuch as it cannot be without a corporeal organ, is an imperfect kind of knowledge. Pain he cannot feel as we do, because that tendeth to destruction, which is the period of imperfection: yet whatsoever pain any sensible or material object can inflict upon us, he alone can inflict the same in an higher degree. The measure of pain, likewise, which we feel

by sense, he knows much better without sense or feeling of it. But when we say all things are in him, after a more excellent manner than they are or can be in themselves, we must not conceit a multitude or diversity of excellencies in his essence, answering to the several natures of things created; we must not imagine one excellency suitable to elementary bodies, another to mixed, a third to vegetables, a fourth to sense, &c., one to the human nature, another to the angelical. And if [n] Plato meant there were as many several ideas eternally extant, whether in the first Cause of things, or without him, as there were substances specifically distinct one from another, his opinion may neither be followed nor approved by any Christian. In all these, divine excellency, as one face in many glasses of different frame, is diversly represented, being in itself more truly one than any other entity that is termed one, or than any bond of union between things united. Of natures extant, some, to our capacity, represent him better, some worse; not the meanest or basest but is in some sort like him; not the most excellent creature that is, not all the excellencies of all, can so fully represent his nature as an ape's shadow doth a man's body. But what in other cases would seem most strange, infinite variety best sets forth the admirable excellency of his indivisible unity.

[n] Tertium genus est eorum quæ proprie sunt: innumerabilia hæc sunt, sed extra nostrum posita conspectum. Quæ sunt, interrogas? Propria Platonis suppellex est. Ideas vocat, ex quibus quæcunque videmus omnia fiunt, et ad quas cuncta formantur. Hæ immortales, immutabiles, inviolabiles sunt. Quid sit idea, id est, quid Platoni esse videatur, audi. Idea est eorum quæ natura fiunt exemplar æternum.—Sen. Ep. 58. Plato in Timæo ait idæas nunquam fieri, semper esse: corporea autem omnia nunquam esse, semper fieri.—Vide Cusan. Dialog. de Genesi, quomodo idem, identificando, pluralitatem producit.

3. Touching the question proposed, Whether he were one excellency or all excellencies? whether he were one perfection or all perfections? *respondent ultima primis*, the answer is in a manner given in the beginning of this discourse. Though he that saith "God is all perfections" excepts none, yet he includes only perfections numerable and participated. 17 And to say he were only one perfection, implies only perfection limited, and therefore perfection borrowed, not independent. Or admitting there be a mean between all or some perfections, and one perfection, which may fitly be expressed by all perfection; yet he that should thus say, "God is the universal unity or totality of perfection," had need to distinguish accurately of universality and totality, and define *universale ante rem* more exquisitely than the Platonics do, that he may acquit his meaning from suspicion of such totality or universality as arises not only by aggregation of parts, but whose extent is no more than equal to all its parts. For every other universal or whole is fully equalized by all the parts taken together; whereas the Divine Nature infinitely exceeds all particular natures or perfections possible, though in number they could be infinite. It is then (if any man list so to speak) such a totality or universality as cannot be augmented, much less made up by multiplication of any other perfection, though prosecuted *in infinitum;* neither diminishable or exhaustible by multiplicity or division of particulars derived from it. But whether we consider this his infinite essence in itself, or as it eminently contains all things possible; the incomprehensibility of it is in both respects more fully intimated (expressed it cannot be) by indefinite forms of speech, than by addition of any definite terms, whether of singularity, universality, or totality. He

speaks more fully and more safely that saith, God is being itself, or perfection itself, than he that saith, he is the only being, or all being, the only perfection, or all perfection, the totality of being and of perfection. So all plurality be excluded, we express his being and perfection best by leaving them, as they truly are, without all quantity.

4. That all plurality, not only of ideal perfections, answering to the natures of things numerable or created, but of internal perfections, whose different titles necessarily breed plurality of conceits in us, must be excluded from the true orthodoxal intellectual apprehension of the illimited essence, may from the former main principle be thus evinced: In that he is without beginning, without end, without all cause of being, without dependence; we cannot imagine, or at least our understanding must correct our imaginations if they shall suggest his power to be as the stem, wisdom, goodness, and other like attributes, as branches growing from his being or essence, as from the root. For if his being or essence be absolutely independent, it is absolutely illimited; and being such, what could limit or restrain it from being life, from being power, from being wisdom, from being goodness, from being infinitely whatsoever any thing that hath being is? [o] He that affirms any of these attributes to be what another is not, or divine essence not to be

[o] Deus vero multipliciter quidem dicitur, magnus, bonus, sapiens, beatus, verus, et quicquid aliud non indigne dici videtur: sed eadem magnitudo ejus est, quæ sapientia: non enim mole magnus est, sed virtute. Et eadem bonitas quæ sapientia, et magnitudo, et eadem veritas, quæ illa omnia. Et non est ibi aliud beatum esse, et aliud magnum, aut sapientem, aut verum, aut bonum esse, aut omnino ipsum esse. Nec quoniam Trinitas est, ideo triplex putandus est: alioqui minor erit, Pater solus, aut Filius solus, quam simul Pater et Filius.—August. de Trinitate, lib. 6. cap. 7. §. 8, 9.

identically what all those are, must grant as well the attributes as the essence to be finite and limited. If power in God have a being distinct from wisdom, and wisdom another being distinct from goodness, one must needs want so much of infinite being as another hath of proper being distinct from it, and at the best they can be but infinite *secundum quid*, or in their rank. Again, if any of them be what essence identically is not, essence cannot be infinite; because wisdom, power, 18
and being have their several beings distinct from it. And the nearer these come (whether severally or jointly considered) to the nature of true infinity, the more naked and impotent they leave their mother-essence if we once grant essence and them to be distinct, as parents and children, or as root and branch; or to what use should powerless essence serve? to support these branches of infinity? This it could not do without infinite power. And those branches, if they need a root or supportance, their being must needs be dependent, and therefore limited.

5. From the former definition of absolute infinity, *Infinitum est extra quod nihil est*, we may conclude, that unless all power, unless all wisdom, unless all goodness, unless all that truly is, or can possibly be supposed to have true being, be identically contained in God's essence, he could not be absolutely infinite or illimited in being. Whatsoever is uncapable of limit is uncapable of division or numerical difference: for wheresoever it can be truly said, This is one, and that another, or This is, and is not that, each hath distinct limits. But seeing our imagination or phantasy is divisible, and our purest intellectual conceits of infinity but finite, we cannot think of God as infinite in power, infinite in wisdom and in essence; but we must frame a conceit of power distinct from our conceit of essence, and

a conceit of wisdom distinct from both. And this plurality of conceits in us usually brings forth a conceit of plurality betwixt his essence and his attributes, unless our understandings be vigilant, and attentive to correct our phantasies, by this following and the like known philosophical truth: as we cannot contemplate incorporeal substances without imagination of some corporeal form, and yet the understanding constantly denies them to be like their pictures presented to it by the phantasy, or to have any such corporeal form as it doth paint them in; so in this case, notwithstanding the plurality of our imperfect conceits, or multiplicity of perfections imagined by us in our contemplations of the Godhead, we must steadfastly believe and acknowledge that he infinitely is what all these several representations intimate; not by composition, or mixture of perfections severally infinite, but by indivisible unity of independent and illimited being. And as it is a maxim most infallible in natural philosophy, *Vis unita fortior*, "Force, otherwise the same, is always greater united, than being scattered or diffused;" so is the metaphysical extract of it more eminently true in divinity. The indivisible unity of illimited being or perfection is in every respect imaginable more excellent and sovereign, than all infinite perfections by imagination possibly could be, so they were, though never so strictly, but united. From this fundamental truth of God's absolute infinity by indivisible unity, we may infer, he is powerful above all conceit of infinite power, rooted in the same essence with infinite wisdom, and partaker of all her fruits, but not identically the same with her. Wise he is, beyond all conceit of infinite wisdom, though sworn confederate with infinite power, or linked with it; or with other perfections in any other bond, but not in absolute identity. Good like-

wise he is above all possible conceit of infinite goodness, though indissolubly matched with all other perfections that can be conceived, unless they be conceived (as we must believe in him they are) different only in name or man's conceit, but indivisibly agreeing with it in the internal unity and identity of nature and essence. Lastly, the immensity of his majesty, and infinity of 19
duration, common to his essence and all his attributes, infinitely exceed all conceit of infinite succession or extension, whose parts cannot be actually and indivisibly the same one with another, or with the whole.

This is the bottomless and boundless ocean of admiration, wherein contemplative wits may bathe themselves with great delight, but whereinto they cannot dive without great danger: That the totality of every conceivable excellency and perfection should be contained after a manner far more excellent in unity indivisible, than if their natures, which they hold thus in common, were laid out in several, without any bounds prescribed, besides infinities proper to each kind.

6. But seeing our imaginations have a more sensible apprehension of greatness expressed under the notion of totality or divisible infinity, than under the conceit of indivisible unity; and seeing every whole seems much greater when it is resolved into parts, (as a mile by land, whose several quarters or less portions are distinctly represented to our eyes, seems much longer than two miles by water, whose level surface affords no distinct representation of parts, or diversity of aspect,) it will be very behoveful to unfold some principal branches of being or perfection, whose infinity or totality is eminently contained in the unity of infinite being. For being thus sorted by imagination into their several ranks, like so many numbers in a table ready for addition, the understanding may with ad-

miration guess at the product; like an arithmetician, which had gone so far in geometrical progression, that he could not number the last and complete sum, yet acknowledgeth that the progress in nature can admit no end or limit; or though we could thus proceed by addition or multiplication of perfections *in infinitum*, we were still to allow the understanding to use the improvement of the former rule, *Vis unita fortior*, or to admit the Platonic's conceit concerning the masculine force of unity in respect of plurality's effeminate weakness to be in this point more orthodoxal than in any.

SECTION II.

Of the several Branches of absolute Infinity; or of the Infinity of the Divine Attributes, as they are severally apprehended by us.

CHAP. V.

Of Divine Immensity, or of that Branch of absolute Infinity whereof Infinity in Magnitude or Space imaginary is the Shadow.

ORDER of nature leads us first to explicate two branches of perfection infinite, that answer unto a kind of infinity so frequent and obvious to our thoughts, that our imaginations will hardly suffer it to be severed from those subjects which our understandings by light of reason may, and by the eye of faith must, confess to be finite; to wit, time and place. The cause of this difficulty in abstraction was signified before [p] to be this:

[p] In the 5th book, chap. 3. §. 2.

No event there is observed by sense but is husked in the circumstance of place and time, whence it is that these two accompany many phantasms, after they be winnowed from all the rest, into the closet of the understanding. The conceit of mathematical or metaphysical space is so naturally annexed to our imagination of time and place physical, that albeit reason as well as scripture demonstrate the world to be, for physical magnitude, finite, yet our phantasies cannot be curbed from running into imaginary local distance, beyond the utmost surface of this goodly visible work of God, yea, beyond the heaven of heavens. The philosopher which thought all place or local distance to be contained within the utmost sphere, it being contained in nothing else, (for *Extra cœlum nihil est* was his saying,) might in congruity have granted a like termination or circumscription of succession, or time; unto which, notwithstanding, our imaginations will not easily subscribe. For though our understanding oft refute their error which deny the beginning of time, yet our senses still nurse an imaginary successive duration much longer before the creation of this visible world than the continuation of it hath been. And (which is much to be admired) some school-brains have been so puzzled in passing this unsoundable gulf, as to 21 suspect that God, which is now in every place of the world created by him, was as truly in these imaginary distances of place and time before the creation was attempted. Thus have they made place commensurable to his immensity, and succession, or time, coequal to his eternity. But what could they answer us if we should demand, whether this duration or local distance wherein they imagine God to have been before the creation were created by him, or not? whether they were truly something, or merely nothing? If

they held them to be merely nothing, they should have told us, that they had a real imagination of an infinite space which really was not; and therefore could not be truly termed imaginary space before the world was created. For it is one thing to imagine an infinite space, and another to avouch there was an infinite imaginary space before they could have any imagination of it. He that made the world and all that is in it is not much beholding to those men for building him an infinite castle, not in the air, (which had no being before the creation,) but in that which neither then was, nor since hath had any being, save only in the vanishing imaginations of men which have perished. For if this imaginary space were any more than a mere imagination, it was surely created by God. Had then this imaginary space another space or distance local, or this imaginary time or successive duration another duration, wherein to be produced? or do they make this imaginary time or place fully commensurable to eternity or immensity? If God from eternity had been in any other infinity besides himself, he could not be said to be incomprehensible. By this imaginary space no realty can be truly meant besides God himself, whom the [q] Hebrews enstyle by the name of *place*, to wit, *infinite*.

q Axioma hic proponit R. David. Tu reples omnem locum, et comprehendis, et nullo loco comprehenderis, nec ullus te locus complecti, et contineri potest. Hinc Hebræi etiam Deum indigitant vocabulo מקום locum, quum dicunt, Benedictus locus ברוך המקום. Cujus appellationis R. Elias in Tisbite adfert duplicem rationem. Quia Deus instar loci omnia complectitur, ipse autem a nullo comprehenditur. Qui autem hodie contendunt Deum esse corpus cœlo inclusum, minus recte sentiunt, quam Judæorum rabbini. Dolendum est ista contraria errata hodie defendi. Quidam disputant et asserunt corpus Christi esse utique: et tamen negant esse spiritum præsertim immensum et infinitum. Alii negantes Deum esse spiritum simplicem, faciunt corporeum, et loco circumscribunt.—Coppen in Psal. cxxxix. 7. *Quo ibo a spiritu tuo?*

2. But what shall we answer unto these or the like captious demands of the atheist: If the world, if time, if place, which now are, had not been from everlasting; where was your God when these were not, somewhere or nowhere? If nowhere, he and nothing might be fellow residents. In respect of eternity or immensity, no creature, no positive essence, no numerable part of this universe is so like unto him, as this negation of all things which we describe by the name of *nothing:* it hath no beginning or end of days. Nothing, or the negation of all things, as it is the object of our positive conceit, is more like unto him than any one thing, in that no distinct or proper place of residence can be assigned to nothing, or to the negation of all things: yet most unlike him, in that it is truly and absolutely nowhere, not in itself. *Non entis, non est actio, non est qualitas, non conditio;* That which is not, can have no capacity to accept any condition of being, it can have no right or title to be termed itself. We may truly say some objective conceits are nothing; but we cannot rightly conceive that nothing should have any degree or kind of being; and want of being is the worst kind of barrenness that can be imagined. We cannot imagine it should bring forth any degree or rank of being. It cannot be mother to that which 22
possibly may be; it cannot be nurse to that which is. But of God we cannot absolutely say, "He was nowhere before the world was made;" we must use this limitation, "He was nowhere save in himself:" but such and so in himself, that he was more than all things, longer than time, greater than place, more infinite than capacity itself, uncapable of circumscription or commensurability, able to limit time and place (or whatsoever we conceive to be by succession or addition infinite) by his essential presence, or coexistence more

than penetrative; being so in both, in all things that are, as nothing possibly could have beginning or continuance of being unless he were in them as the centre of their supportance, yet so as they cannot environ or encompass him. The absolute infinity of his being includes an absolute impossibility of his being only in things that are or may be, though by his power those may be in number, by succession, infinite.

3. Had the evaporations of proud phantastic melancholy eclipsed the lustre of his glorious presence in that late prodigious questionist's brain, which would bring us out of the sunshine of the gospel into old Egyptian darkness? for, as some well conjecture, this error of enclosing God in the heavens, and excluding his essential presence from this inferior world, was first brought forth in Egypt, but so ill taken as it could not be propagated to many nations; entertained by few philosophers of better sort, Aristotle, or the author of the book *De mundo ad Alexandrum*, excepted; from whose opinion Vorstius did herein dissent, that he held God to be every where by his power and immediate providence: his error notwithstanding is exceeding gross and unsufferable, in that he makes his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, in whose sweet harmony Divine Providence especially consists, but as agents or ambassadors to his infinite majesty; as if his infinite majesty only were full *compeer* to his essence, unfitting to be employed abroad, or to keep residence any where save in the court of heaven. Or if his power and wisdom be joint assessors with his essence in the heavens, and yet reach withal unto the earth, unto every thing within this canopy which is spread betwixt us and his glorious presence; his power, his wisdom, &c. may in some sort be held more infinite than his essence, as being in many places

where it is not. But for God to be every where here on earth, or in the region under the earth, by his wisdom, by his power, or by his goodness, is perhaps in his language no more than that the effects of these attributes are every where; that all things, as well in earth as in heaven, are essentially subject to that eternal law which he hath appointed them; that every creature doth as constantly fulfil his will and obey his power in his absence, as if it were penetrated by his presence; that the eye of his knowledge pierceth every corner of the world, and seeth the secrets of men's hearts as clearly as if it were resident in their centres. And in part, unto this purpose, some great schoolmen distinguish the manner of God's being in all things, by his essence, by his power, by his presence. Let us take it as possible to supposition or imagination, (what by the habit of Christian faith we are fully persuaded to be in itself impossible,) what by light of reason might be demonstrated to imply a manifest contradiction to any well-settled understanding, viz. That infinite essence or being itself should not be every where essentially present, or that infinite power should not be able to reach every possible effect; yet should all things that are be present to 23
him, whose name, whose best description is, *I am*. Nothing could be done or said without his presence, that is, without his perfect notice. And in this sense perhaps it hath been rightly avouched by some good authors, whose meaning hath been much mistaken or wilfully perverted by others, That all things, as well future as past, are alike present to him, who was every where, (before there was any distinction of times;) because nothing can be said or done without his perfect knowledge or just notice. Nothing can be begun, continued, or finished, without his express warrant or

intuitive permission: he hath a vigilant eye over all things that are, or possibly can be. Or taking it again as not impossible to imagination, that divine knowledge were not so truly infinite as we believe it is; yet admitting his power to be truly infinite, nothing could be done, said, or intended, without its concourse, operation, or assistance. So that he might be every where by his infinite power, albeit his knowledge were not infinite; or every where by his infinite knowledge, albeit his power were but finite. But by the infallible consequence of these indemonstrable principles it will necessarily follow, that his essence being, as was shewed before, truly infinite, nor world, nor time, nor place, nor power, nor wisdom, nor any thing possible, can be where it is not, it must needs be where any thing is, or possibly may be. He is in every centre of bodily or material substances, in every point imaginable of this visible universe, as an essential root, whence all and every part of what is besides him spring, without waste or diffusion of his substance, without nutriment or sustentation from any other root or element. The conservation of immaterial or illocal substances is from the benefit of his essential presence. Materials are daily made and renewed by the transient efficacy of his creative power.

4. Do we make these collections only, or doth not the scripture teach this philosophy also? *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God far off?* Jer. xxiii. 23. Nothing is, nothing can be without the reach of his power; his omnipotency cannot be confined within the places that are: for his hand hath made them all, not as prisons to enclose his essence, not as manacles to hinder the exercise of his mighty arm: *Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord,* ibid. 24. This

is a formal demand of our assent unto the infinity of his knowledge. These are two special, but not the only ways of his being every where, which the scripture teacheth; for there follows a third, which after the manner of our understanding is the root or foundation of all the rest, that indeed from which the two former branches are most necessarily inferred: *Do not I fill heaven and earth?* saith the Lord. Doth he fill heaven and earth by his power, or by his knowledge only? Nay, but most properly and in the first place by his essential presence; for his essence is infinitely powerful, infinitely wise.

His filling the earth as well as heaven by his essential presence cannot be denied but from one of these two reasons following:

Either, that his essence is altogether uncapable of intimate coexistence with such gross and base creatures as the parts of this inferior world;

Or else, because it is his will to abstract or withhold his essential presence from them.

To affirm the former part, to wit, that his nature is uncapable of intimate coexistence with any nature 24
created by him, is to deny his omnipotency; as all by necessary consequence do which grant not the immensity of his essence. For what can withstand or withdraw his essence from piercing the earth as well as heaven? Not the hardness of it, not the loathsomeness of the vile bodies contained in it. If either of these qualities, or aught besides, could deny the admission of his essential presence, he were not omnipotent, because not able to place his essence in that local space, in which, were it filled with more subtle or more glorious bodies, it might as well reside as in the heavens. Suppose he should (as no doubt he is able) annihilate the earth, and create a new heaven in the

space wherein it now is, or demolish his present heavenly seat, or turn it into a baser mass than this earth is; were it not possible for him to be in this new heaven by his essential presence, or should he be neither in it nor in the new earth? If he could not be here, he were in this respect more impotent than the angels, who can change their mansions when they mislike them.

5. Shall we then take the latter part of the former division, and say, It is his will and pleasure to withdraw his essence from this lower room of his own edifice, whiles it remains so ill garnished as now it is? If he have made heaven his habitation by choice, not by necessity of his immensity, with which all places, as we contend, must necessarily be filled; he might relinquish it by the like free choice of some other mansion, which he could make for himself as pleasant and beautiful; yea, he might by the like freedom of will come and dwell with us here on earth. So that in the conclusion, he which admitteth God's will to be free, but denies the absolute immensity of his essence, makes him capable of local motion or migration from place to place: and such motion necessarily includeth mutability, which is altogether incompatible with infinity. Reason grounded on scripture will warrant us to conclude from the former principle, that he which hath no cause of being can have no limits of being, no bounds beyond which it cannot be. Essence or being illimited cannot possibly be distinguished by severalties of internal perfections, though united; much less can it be distinguished or limited by any place, whether real or imaginary. In that he is the authorless author of all being, it is altogether as impossible for him not to be in every thing that is, as it is for any thing to be without him. The

indivisible unity of his infinite essence is the centre and supporter of all things, the conservation of place, and that which holdeth things divisible from resolving into nothing.

6. *Dominus ipse est Deus in cœlo sursum et in terra deorsum: The Lord* (saith Moses) *he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath*, Deut. iv. 39; yet saith Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 27, *Behold, the heavens and heavens of heavens cannot contain thee.* May we say then, he is as truly without the heavens, as he is in them? or that he is where nothing is with him? Surely he was when nothing was, and then he was where nothing was besides himself. Or peradventure before the creation of all things numerable, there neither was when nor where, but only an incomprehensible perfection of indivisible immensity and eternity; which would still be the same, though neither heaven nor earth, nor any thing in them, should any more be. We may not so place him without the heavens, as to clothe him with any imaginary space, or give the check to his immensity by any parallel distance local. But he is said to be without the heavens, inasmuch as his infinite essence cannot be contained in them, but necessarily contains them. He is so without them, or, if you will, beyond them, that albeit a thousand more worlds were stowed by his powerful hand each above other, and all above this, he should by virtue of his infinite essence, not by free choice of will or mutation of place, be as intimately coexistent to every part of them, as he now is to any part of this heaven and earth which we see. This attribute of divine immensity was acknowledged and excellently expressed by many of the ancient philosophers, but most pithily by some of the ancient fathers. "Before all things," saith Tertullian, "God

was alone, and he was to himself world, place, and all things[r]." The manner of his coexistence with the world Philo[s] the Jew well expressed: "God filleth all things, yet is contained in none, containing all." The vicinity of his essence preserveth their essences more truly than the symbolizing qualities of their natural places do. And even this efficacy of symbolizing or preserving qualities flows as immediately from his essential presence, as the passive aptitude of bodies preserved by them doth. The more the places are through which bodies natural swiftly move, the less properly they are in them. In analogy to this condition of natural bodies, the more capable man is of all knowledge, the more liable his capacity is to distraction, as consisting rather in united perfections than in firm and indivisible unity of perfection: and therefore it is often said of most pregnant wits, *Qui ubique est, nusquam est,* "He that is every where is no where;" or he that engageth himself to all courses of life, goeth through with none. But of God, who is perfection itself, not by aggregation, but by absolute unity of essence, that of St. Bernard is most admirably verified, *Nusquam est, et ubique est;* He is no where, because no place whether real or imaginary can comprehend or contain him; he is every where, because no body, no space, or spiritual substance can exclude his presence, or avoid the penetration of his essence. But St. Gregory's character of God's ubiquitary presence and immensity is more lively and full: *Deus est intra omnia non inclusus, extra omnia non exclusus, supra omnia non elatus;* God is within all

[r] Ante omnia enim Deus erat solus, ipse sibi et mundus et locus et omnia. Solus autem, quia nihil aliud extrinsecus præter illum. Cæterum ne tunc quidem solus: habebat enim secum quam habebat in semetipso, rationem suam scilicet.—Tertull. adversus Praxean. cap. 5.

[s] De confusione linguarum.

things, yet not shut up or enclosed in them; he is without all things, yet not excluded from them; he is above all things, yet not elevated or exalted by them; he is below all things, yet not burdened or depressed by them.—Greg. in Psalm cxxxix.

7. Anselmus notwithstanding (had not long custom or general consent prescribed too strongly against him) would have reformed this kind of speech, *Deus est in omni loco*, "God is in every place," by changing one particle, *Deus est cum omni loco*, "God is with every place." This criticism of his, though well approved by some good writers, whilst they dispute against such as say God was every where before any place was, yet (in my opinion) the use of it, were it as common as the other, which he sought by this to correct, would conceal much matter of admiration, (which the description of immensity used by St. Bernard and others promptly suggests,) if not occasion or suggest an erroneous imagination of coextension in the divine essence. The bodies which are contained in places are truly said to be with the places which contain them, and the places with them: and we may distributively aver that every body is with every place, and every bodily substance is with its mathematical dimensions in the same place with it. But so to be 26
in every place, in every least part of every body, as not to be contained in any or all of them, though we should multiply them *in infinitum*, doth exclude all conceit or coextension with them, and much better notify the indivisible unity of God's immensity, and the incomprehensibleness of his essential presence, than if we should say he were with every place. But as no characters of the incomprehensible Essence's ubiquitary presence do so well befit it, as these that intimate more to our cogitations than we can in words express;

so of this kind I have found none, from which I have received so full instruction, or reaped the like fruits of admiration, as from that of Trismegist: *Deus est sphæra, cujus centrum est ubique, cujus peripheria nusquam;* "God is a sphere, whose centre is every where, whose circumference is no where." Not the least particle of this universal globe or sphere but is supported by the indivisible unity of his essence, as by an internal centre; and yet neither the utmost circumference of this visible world, nor any circumference conceivable, can so circumscribe or comprehend his essential presence, that it might be said, Thus far it reacheth and no farther. For albeit he would crown the convexity of these heavens with others, so much higher and more spacious than these heavens, as these are than the earth, and continue this course unto the world's end, yet all should be comprehended in his essence, it could not be comprehended in any. Their circumference should still be somewhere, whereas his essence, though still enlarging (by this supposed daily exercise of his power) the bounds of its actual coexistence with these new creatures, is in itself altogether boundless. Omnipotency itself cannot pitch a circumference to it, because nothing can be, but it must be in it which only truly is, and cannot be contained in any thing imaginable. In that all things are contained in him, he is rightly resembled by a sphere, which is of all figures the most capacious; in that all things cannot comprehend him, he is rightly resembled by a sphere whose circumference is nowhere.

8. Two points notwithstanding in the former resemblance seem difficult to men's conceits, but more difficult it is fully to express what may rightly be conceived concerning them. The former difficulty is how a centre should be conceived to be every where: the

second, how the indivisibility of God's presence in every place should be compared unto a centre. To the former it may be said, that as the divine essence by reason of its absolute infinity hath an absolute necessity of coexistence with space or magnitude infinite; so were it possible there should be (as some divines hold it possible there may be) a magnitude or material sphere actually infinite, this magnitude could have no set point for its centre, but of every point designable in it we might avouch this is the centre as well as that. Every point should have the negative properties of a spherical centre; there could be no inequality between the distances of several points from the circumference of that which is infinite, and hath no bounds of magnitude. To the second difficulty it may be said, the manner of divine presence or coexistence to every place or parcel of bodies visible, is rightly compared unto a centre, in that it hath no diversity of parts, but is indivisibly present to all and every part of things divisible. His presence again is herein like to magnitude actually infinite, in that it can have no circumference. But whether the divine essence may have as perfect actual coexistence to every point or centre, as it hath to every least portion of 27
magnitudes divisible, cannot so clearly be inferred from the indivisibility of divine immensity, because the indivisibility of centres or points and of spiritual substances are heterogeneal, and heterogeneals are oft-times assymmetral, that is, not exactly commensurable. Hence the most subtle schoolmen or metaphysical divines, as well ancient as modern, resolve it as a point irresoluble by human wit, whether a mathematical point or centre can be the complete and definitive place of an angel, albeit they hold the angelical natures to be as truly indivisible as points or centres are. But

it is one thing for an immaterial or spiritual essence to have true coexistence with every centre, another to be confined to a centre, or to have a definitive place or coexistence in it: and whatsoever may be thought of angels, of the divine essence we may say, that he is as properly in every centre as in every place, seeing we acknowledge him to be alike incomprehensible and indivisibly in both. The manner of his indivisibility we conceive by his coexistence to a centre: his incomprehensibleness, by his coexistence to all spaces or places imaginable, without coextension to any, without comprehension in all. We may in no case imagine that there is more of God, or that God is more fully in a great space than in a little; in the whole world, than in a man or little world: for this once granted, an ass's head should participate the essential presence of the Deity in greater measure than a man's heart doth. But in what respects God is said to be more specially present in one place than in another, or to be present with some and absent from others, hereafter.

9. The absolute perfection of this attribute, in whose right apprehension or conceit many other divine perfections, according to our manner of conceiving them, are as it were couched or lodged, may best be gathered by opposition to the imperfections of bodies or material magnitudes. A body though of homogeneal nature, suppose a pole or stone fixed in the earth, environed above with water and the air, can have no coexistence with these divers bodies, otherwise than according to the diversity of its own parts: that part of it which hath coexistence with the air, can have no coexistence with the earth or water. Far otherwise it is in God, whose absolute infinity, in that it is not composed of parts, but consists in perfect unity, cannot be coex-

istent to any place after any other manner than he is coexistent to all, that is, by indivisible unity or identity. Wheresoever he is, (and he is every where,) he is unity itself, infinity itself, immensity itself, perfection itself, power itself. All these branches of quantity, in which we seek to ingraff so many sorts of infinities, thereby to express or resemble his incomprehensible nature, do flow from participation of his infinite presence. Unless he were infinity or immensity itself, there could be no magnitude, no measure quantative, by whose multiplication we could in any sort gather or guess what immensity or infinity meant. That imaginary infinity which we conceive by succession or composition of parts (for their several extensions finite, though in number infinite) is but a transient ray or beam of that actual and stable infiniteness which he possesseth in perfect unity, without any imaginary diversity of parts united. Had his immensity any diversity of parts, there should be more power in many parts than in one or few : unto the full exercise of his whole power or force there should be a concurrence of all parts required : and this concurrence of parts in number infinite, would perhaps be impossible.[28] *Infinitum transire non potest.* At the least, were divine power so lodged in divine immensity, as strength or power is in our bodily faculties, it could not be so omnipotent as we believe it is. Our strength or force is always increased by unition or contraction of several parts; his power can receive no increase, seeing his immensity excludes all division, and doth not so properly include, but rather properly is unity itself.

10. The prophets and other holy men in their pathetical expressions sometime speak of God as far absent, because his powerful presence is not manifested in such sort as they could wish: *Oh that thou wouldest*

rend the heavens, (saith the prophet, Isa. lxiv. 1,) *that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.* But to indoctrinate us, that this description of his powerful presence did include no dogmatical assertion of his local descent, no denial of his being every where, or filling every place by his essential presence; the same prophet elsewhere pictures out his immensity to us under the shape of a giant able to squeeze the whole globe of heaven, earth, and waters: *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with his span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in his three fingers,* (after such a manner as men take up dust or sand,) *and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?* Isa. xl. 12. *Behold, the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are accounted to him less than nothing, and vanity:* ver. 15, 17. Thus he linketh his essential presence with his power and knowledge: *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding,* ver. 27, 28. Yet Job in his anguish had almost said as Jacob did, *O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come*

even to his seat! I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him, Job xxiii. 3, 5, 8, 9. But though he might hide himself from Job, yet could not Job hide himself or his ways from him; for so he confesseth in the next words: *He knoweth the way which I take,* ver. 10. *Whither shall I go* (saith the Psalmist) *from thy spirit? or whither shall I fly from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me,* &c. Psalm cxxxix. 7—10. *Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.* These and the last strains of other godly men argue a sympathy of God's essential presence, not only environing their bodies, but penetrating their souls, and diffused through their hearts. His coexistence with all, his essential presence or inhabitation in all, is the same, although the worldly-minded take no notice of it. And when it is 29
said that he *beholdeth* or *knoweth* the ungodly *afar off,* this language fitly expresseth their conceit of him and of his essence; they consider not that he is always near unto them, always about them, always within them, but in heaven only, whither their thoughts seldom ascend. And according to their misconceit of him, so it happens to them; they imagine him to be far distant from them, and his help and succour in their distress comes slowly to them, as if it had too far to go.

CHAP. VI.

Of Eternity, or of that Branch of absolute Infinity, whereof successive Duration or the imaginary Infinity of Time is the Model.

1. WHATSOEVER hath been or rightly may be conceived of divine immensity, will in proportion as well suit unto eternity; and unto this divine attribute is that of Tertullian as appliable: *Ante omnia Deus erat solus, et erat sibi tempus, mundus, et omnia:* "Before all things were, God was, and he was unto himself time, the world, and all things else." We cannot properly say, he was in time before he made the world. For as St. Augustine acutely collects, if he which always is, and was, and is to come, had always been in time, he could not have been before all times; nor could he be, as we believe he is, as truly before all times future as before all times past. His eternity then is the inexhaustible fountain or infinite ocean, from which time or duration successive, (in what finite substances soever they be seated,) with all their several branches or appurtenances, do perpetually flow; and unto eternity they have, if not the same proportion, yet the same references, the same dependences on it, which finite and created magnitudes have to divine immensity[t]. As there was from all eternity a possibility for us to be before we were, so our actual being or existence whilst it lasteth is composed of a capacity to be what we are, and of the actuation or filling of this capacity. Life (sensitive especially) is but the motion or progress of this capacity towards that which fills it, or as it were a continual sucking in of present existence, or continuation of actual being from somewhat preexistent. Unless the vegetables by which

[t] Vide Tertull. in Apologet. cap. 48.

our life is continued had existence before they become our nutriment, they could not possibly nourish us, continue us in that estate of being which we have. Nor could these vegetables themselves exist, unless they did draw their existence or continuation of their being from that which did every way exist before them, and unto which they do by motion or continuation of their being approach. So that future times, and all things contained in time itself, presuppose a fountain of life, as truly preexistent to their future terminations or motions, as it was to their beginnings. That description of time, *tempus edax rerum*, as if it were the devourer of all things which are subject to alteration, did relish more of poetical wit, than of any metaphysical truth. For if time did devour all things which are brought forth in time, what is it that could possibly nourish them, or continue their being from their beginning to their end? whilst the time appointed for them lasts, they cannot possibly be consumed or perish. Nothing there is that doth or can desire its own destruction, nor long after the presence or fruition of that which doth devour or destroy it. All things naturally desire the continuation of such being as they have, which notwithstanding things temporal cannot have, but from the continuation or fruition of time. Time then it is not, but their own motions or endeavours to enjoy or entertain time approaching, which doth waste or consume things temporal. We naturally seek to catch time, and it is the nature of time, though continually caught, not to be held by us. This nimbleness of time is so like unto the swift progress of motion, that some acknowledge no difference at all between them; whereas in true philosophy, the length of time passing by us is only notified by motion. Motion in true observation goes one way, and drives

time another, as the stream which runs eastward turns the wheel westward. Our actual being or existence slides from us with time, and our capacity of being, continuing still the same, runs on still, being always internally moved with desire of actuation or replenishment; and this replenishment cannot otherwise be gotten, than by gaining a new coexistence with time approaching, whose office, designed by eternity, it is to repair the ruins which motions present or past have wrought in our corruptible substances. The best of our life, the very being of things generable, (as [u] Plotinus excellently observes,) is but as a continual draught or receipt of being from the inexhaustible fountain of life. Nature, saith he, (meaning the nature of things generable,) hastens unto that being which is to come, nor can it rest, seeing it draws or sucks in that being which it hath by doing now this and now that, being moved as it were in a circle with desire of essence, or of being what it is. Nor are we men, or any creatures, specially generable, permitted to draw or suck so much of our proper being from the fountain of eternity at once, or in any one point of time, as we list. We have our portions of life or self-fruition distributed

[u] A rebus generalibus si abstuleris ipsum erit, cum in perpetua acquisitione versentur, subito non esse contingit. Rebus autem, quæ non sunt tales si ipsum erit adjunxeris, accidit a sede ipsius esse labi. Manifestum enim ex hoc fuerit, ipsum esse non esse illis innatum, si fiat ex eo, quod futurum sit, et factum fuerit. et sit in posterum faciendum. Videtur enim in rebus generabilibus id potissimum essentia esse, scilicet tractus quidam ab ipso esse ex generationis initio, quousque ad temporis extrema perveniat, quando non sit ulterius, idque ipsum quod dicitur, est in eis existere, ac si quis quicquam ex hoc ductu circumcidat, vita comminui. Quapropter et esse diminui, et universo quidem esse ejusmodi oportet, quousque sic erit. Quamobrem ad ipsum esse futurum natura festinat, neque vult quiescere, quippe cum esse sibi hauriat, dum aliud quiddam atque aliud agit, moveturque in orbem quodam essentiæ desiderio. — Ptol. Ennead. iii. p. 328.

piecemeal and sparingly unto us, lest too much put into our hands at once might make us prodigal of the whole stock; as many younglings by their parents' too much bounty towards them, whilst their experience is small, overthrow themselves and their posterity: and nimblest wits, for the most part, run through largest fortunes in least time; usually shortening their days by taking up pleasures (due in their season) beforehand, seeking as it were to enjoy the fruits of many years' duration all at once; whereas fruition of delights and pleasures should be measured by the capacity of our estate or condition, as wise men fit their expenses according to the tenor of their revenues.

2. Albeit the constant motion of the sun and moon be appointed by the Creator as a common standard for the measuring of all times, yet every thing temporal, or endowed with duration measurable by the motions of the heavens, hath its proper time, which in all of them is no other than a participation of eternity; and he should define the several branches of time most 31
exactly, that could number or decipher the several actuations, draughts, or replenishments, which are derived from the infinite fountain of life and being, to fill the capacities or satiate the internal desires of things temporal. And albeit the motion of the heavens be constant and uniform, yet the duration of things temporal or sublunary (though measured by their constant motion) is capable of internal contraction and dilatation. Some things have a kind of double duration, and run a course of time as it were indented. Life, albeit in itself most sweet, yet in us is often charged with so [x] great a measure of sour occurrences, that were it at all or most times, as somewhiles it is, the fruition of it could not quit the pains we are put to in

[x] See Ecclesiasticus xli. 2.

preserving it; and the worse our estate is, the longer it seemeth to be such, because vital existence or duration, through distraction of mind, or vehement motion, seemeth divided into more parts, than without such impulsions it could take notice of. In grief or pain, we strive to thrust time present apace from us, that some other may come better attended. In delight or pleasure, we seek to arrest it, and wish to have our joyful moments fixed, or to have them still to return and go, so that we might prolong our days by living the same times over and over again, as men often walk longer in pleasant gardens than in vast fields, by often resuming the same short walks. Were it possible for us to stay those grateful parcels of time till new ones come with like supply, the current of pleasure, thus dammed up, would swell; and our fruition of such imperfect existence as we have would be much more perfect and entire. But seeing the pleasure of borrowed life is to the identity of being but as water to the pipe through which it runs; all the remedy we have against welcome times departing from us, is to regain the like, and make up the unity of our existence of self-fruition by equivalency. The gluts or gushes of pleasure may at one time be much greater than another, yet still transient, never consistent; the fruition of them cannot possibly be entire: begotten and dying in every moment, they are and they are not in a manner both at once, so that we lose them as we gain them.

3. The angelical natures, albeit they account not the continuation of their duration, nor number the portions of their participation of eternity by the motion of the heavens, as being not fed with expectance of that time or succession whose opportunities we watchfully attend; yet their desires (more fervent by

much than we have any) to continue what they are, witness they have not all that in present possession which is allotted to their complete duration. Nothing being the foundation as well of angelical excellencies as of our mediocrities, makes them uncapable of that entire self-fruition which is essential to him which made them of nothing, being made of none. He, as he is of himself without beginning, so is he entirely in himself, and can acquire nothing by succession. He desires not his own duration, which none can give him, nor needs he to desire it, because it is alway entirely and indivisibly present without possibility of addition. For how should essence itself, or infinity of being, get aught to-morrow which to-day it hath not, or lose aught to-day which yesterday it had? The first branch of impossibility which we can conceive as incident to him that is thus truly infinite, is, not at all times to contain within himself all fulness of joy however possible. He is life itself, and therefore life truly infinite; and infinite life, being infinitely sweet, 32 containeth joy truly infinite, altogether uncapable of any addition or diminution. As in a body infinite (could any such be) there could be no middle or extremes; so neither can infinite life admit any parts, as being indivisible into duration subsequent and precedent; natures capable of these differences have always the one accomplished by the other. Time coming (as we said before) repairs the losses of time going, and perfects or supports things natural by successive continuance of present being. But perfection itself can no more be perfected than whiteness can be dyed white. Life, or essence infinite, excludes vacuity, or capacity of resumed acts to fill up the measure of actual existence or fruition of being. In that he is αὐτάρκης, *all-sufficient*, he can want nothing; and to him that can want nothing all

must be present. We must then conceive of the Divine Essence as infinite, not only in life, but in the degrees or acts of life; which in the Eternal cannot be many, but only take the denomination of plurality from things decreed: as he is said everlasting with reference to the perpetuity of succession, which still supposeth his interminate existence as present to the whole and every part of it. Consider him in himself, and he is every way indivisibly infinite and interminable; not only because he had no beginning, nor shall have ending; for so might time or motion be held interminable, could the heavens have been created from everlasting; whose revolutions nevertheless, or successive parts of motion, should have been truly numerable, and therefore terminable; whence whatsoever had been contained within their circuit should still have gotten somewhat which before it had not, either addition of duration, or (which is all one) continuance of their first existence, or some new acts of life, of sense, or reason; but unto Essence infinite none of these can accrue. If they could, as yet he should not be, nor ever could he be actually eternal, but everlastingly only by succession. For eternity, as Boetius hath well defined it, is the entire or total possession of interminable life, all at once or together. Howbeit, these terms of total fruition or possession may seem to include some parts, though not in the life possessed, yet in the possession of it; which (I take it) was far from this good author's meaning. What meant he then to use such terms? Only to exclude succession which hath a totality of being, but not altogether, or all at once. As the next hour, and whatsoever shall have successive duration in it, shall be wholly and fully existent; but so as one part shall go before, another come after: so is not that duration which is inter-

minable. But in what sense totality is attributed to essence or duration infinite, will better appear in the issue of these explications. This definition of Boetius, though conceived in such terms as might minister occasion of wrangling in subtle disputes, doth notwithstanding imprint a more lively character or notion of the everlasting God his infinite happiness, than Aquinas' definition doth, though very artificial: *Æternitas est duratio manens, uniformis, sine principio, et fine, mensura carens;* "Eternity is a duration uniform and permanent, without beginning or end, uncapable of measure."

4. But Plotin[y] (in mine opinion) gives a more deep and full apprehension of it in fewer terms; *Æternitas est vita infinita;* "Eternity is infinity of life;" and such we gather it to be, because it is the university or totality of life, and can lose nothing, in that nothing of it is past, nothing to come. He adds withal that these terms of *being — all — whole —* or *losing nothing*, are added only for explication of that which is sufficiently contained in these words, *infinite life*. In the same treatise he excellently observes, when we say, "That is eternal which always is," (as the Greek αἰὼν *verbatim* signifies,) this[z] *always* is added for declaration 33

[y] Ac si quis æternitatem ita descripserit, scilicet vitam jam infinitam, ex eo, quod sit universa: nihilque amittat, cum nihil vel præterierit, vel sit futurum, alioquin jam tota non esset: is profecto proxime ad definitionem ejus accedet. Quod enim deinceps subditur, [scilicet] huic totam esse, nihilque amittere, expositio quædam est ejus quod dicebatur, scilicet vita jam infinita. —Plotin. Ennead. 3. lib. 7. cap. 4. p. 329.

[z] Non aliud quiddam est ens, aliud vero semper ens: sicut neque aliud est philosophus, aliud vero philosophus verus. Veruntamen, quia nonnulli philosophiam simulant, adjunctum est philosophus verus. Sic et enti ipsum semper, et ipsi semper adjungitur ens, adeo ut dicatur aion i. e. semper ens: unde dicitur æon, i. e. ævum: quapropter sic accipiendum est ipsum semper cum ente, ut vere ens nobis significet.—Plotin. Ennead. 3. lib. 7. cap. 5. p. 330.

sake; and yet, being assumed to express the uncorruptibleness or indeficiency of that which is eternal, it breeds a wandering imagination of plurality or indivisibility of duration. The best medicine, by his prescription, for purging our brains of this erroneous fancy, were to enstyle eternity only with the name of *entity* or *being*. But as being is a name sufficient to express essence, and essence itself, or essence independent, a full expression of eternity; yet because some philosophers comprise generation, or the being of things generable, under the name of essence, it was behoveful, for our better instruction, to say, that is eternal which always is, and cannot cease, to be; whereas in true philosophical contemplation it is one thing truly to be, and always to be. There is no greater difference betwixt these two, than to be a philosopher, and to be a true philosopher: now there can be no truth in saying he is a philosopher who is no true philosopher; for *ens et verum convertuntur*, "the entity of every thing necessarily includes the truth of every thing." Notwithstanding, because some do counterfeit philosophy, or falsely usurp the name of philosophers, we give the title with an addition to such as well deserve it, and enstyle them, by way of difference from the others, *true philosophers:* and in like manner, when we say that is eternal which always is, we seek to notify no more by this universal note *always*, than that it hath a true and no counterfeit, no second-hand or dependent being.

Another secondary and subordinate use of the universal sign *always*, added to entity, is, to intimate the interminable, indistinguishable, and indivisible power which needeth nothing besides that which it actually and for the present hath: now it hath all that is or can be, in that it truly is; for true entity is absolute totality, and unto totality nothing is wanting. But

that which is in time comprehended, how perfect or total soever it may be in its kind, besides other wants, alway needs somewhat to come, never fully besped of time. On the contrary, that which so is, as it needs no after being, and cannot be brought within the lists of time, either determinate or in succession infinite, but now hath whatsoever is expedient to be had, this is that which our notion of eternity hunteth after. That which thus is, hath not its essence or being delivered unto it enwrapped in quantity, but is precedent to all quantity or mensuration: far otherwise have things generable their being, as it were spun out from divisibility. The very first being which they have supposeth quantity; and as much as is cut off from the draught or extension of their duration, so much they lose of their being or perfection.

5. Ignorance of this Plotinical philosophy hath much perplexed some logicians, questioning whether Socrates in the instant of his dissolution or corruption be a man or corpse, or both. To be both implies a contradiction, these two negative propositions being simply convertible: No corpse can be a man: No man can be a corpse: and yet there is as much reason that 34
he should in this instant be both as either. For true resolution we are to say, He was a man, and shall be a corpse; or, He ceaseth to be the one, and begins to be the other. But the being or existence of both, being mensurable by time, must needs be divisible, and for this reason not comprehensible by an instant, which is indivisible. But Plotin's conclusion is, whilst we seek to fit that which truly is with any portion of measure or degree of quantity, the life of it being thus divided by us loseth its indivisible nature: we must then leave it (as it is) indivisible, as well in life or operation, as in essence, and yet infinite in both.

Of time, no part truly is but the present, which is never the same; and as one questioned (in that age wherein the art of navigation was imperfect) whether navigators were to be reckoned amongst the dead or the living; so is it more doubtful than determinable whether time participate more of being or of not being; yet as is time, such is the nature of things brought forth in time; but eternity, (being the duration of Him who only is, being made of none, but Maker of all things, and the dispenser of time itself into its portions,) as Ficinus [a] describes it, is a fixed instant or permanent centre, which needs no succession for supply; all-sufficient to support itself, and all things else. The same writer not unfitly compares eternity to a centre in a circle; and time to the points or extremities of the lines in the circumference, always so moving about the centre, that were it an eye, it might view them all at once. Yet must we not hold eternity to be indivisible after the same manner that points or centres are: these are indivisible because they want the perfection of that quantity whose parts they couple; eternity is indivisible by positive infinity, as containing all the parts or perfections possible of succession in a more eminent manner than they can be contained in time itself, which (as Plato wittily observes) is a moveable image of eternity. This difference betwixt the indivisibility of an instant or moment and eternity may perhaps make the solution of that seeming contradiction less difficult than it is to some great schoolmen's apprehensions: *Petrus in æternitate ægrotat, et, Petrus in æternitate non ægrotat;* "Peter is sick in eternity, Peter is not sick in eternity." This affirmation and denial in one and the same indivisible instant or limited portion of time would infer an indivisible

[a] Ad 7. Plotin. lib. Ennead. 3.

contradiction, which in eternity they do not; and yet is eternity more indivisible than an instant, but indivisible after another manner.

6. But I know not how it comes to pass that the true shadow of perfection itself is ofttimes more apparent in things most imperfect: natures more perfect (by a borrowed perfection) hold the mean between them; out of both we may spell more than we can put together for right expressing the nature of perfection itself. The prime matter though of things created most imperfect, is of creatures sublunary most like unto the Creator, in being ingenerable and incorruptible; in that it is the alpha whence all things generable spring, and the omega into which they are resolved: yet is the prime matter most contrary to its Maker in that wherein it doth resemble him. It is in a sort or manner all things generable, but perfectly nothing, as wanting the true unity of entity, or determinate being. The Creator or Essence itself is the incomprehensible perfection of all things, without participation of their imperfections. The earth again is like the eternal Founder in permanency and immobility; but this it hath from its natural dulness; whereas the perfection of this shadow is in him from the infinite vigour of his vitality. The swift motions of the heavens, or motion as swift as we may imagine, is as a middle term of proportion between the earth's immobility, and the supermotion, or more than infinite mobility of the Deity, which we term the infinite vigour of his vitality. Instants in this are most like eternity, in that an infinite number of them added together yields no increase of quantity; nor doth eternity receive addition from succession infinite, which most unlike it in being divisible doth yet better express the positive infinity of it than instants can do. Eternity

again is like a fixed centre, because indivisibly immutable, yet withal most like a circle; and Trismegist's description of the Deity, *commutatis commutandis*, as well exemplifies the eternity as the immensity of his nature. Eternity is a circular duration whose instants are always, whose terminations or extremities never were, never shall be: it is coexistent to every parcel of time, but not circumscriptible by any; succession infinite cannot be coequal to it: for albeit the motion of the heavens, or other notifications of duration divisible, should continue the same without interruption or end, yet every period and draught of time we can imagine shall still fall within eternity, now totally existent, and which hath been, is, and ever will be unto every minute or scruple of time that hath been, is, or shall be alike everlastingly coexistent, not by acquisition of any new successive parts, but by indivisible and interminable unity.

7. We cannot perhaps properly say that God shall be after all times or durations to come, for duration must flow from his everlasting being without end; and what can be after that which hath no end? And here we suppose, that albeit time or duration successive had their actual beginning with the creatures; yet there shall be or may be, if not a time, yet some duration successively infinite. And that only is after this manner infinite unto which somewhat of the same kind may still be added: thus, as in the continued and divisible quantities, *non datur minimum*, there is no fraction so little but may be less; and as in numbers, *non datur maximum*, there is no number so great but it may be made greater by addition; so in successive duration, *non datur ultimum*, it may be truly said to last for ever, because it can have no last portion. But, howsoever, we cannot properly, or

without exposing our speech to captious exceptions, say that eternity shall be after all time or duration successive; (seeing this may seem to import that duration or succession shall finally cease;) yet that eternity (being duration actually, interminably, and indivisibly, not successively, infinite) now is, and ever was, as infinitely preexistent or precedent to all ages or successions coming towards us, one way, as it is and was to the world's nativity, or the first outgoings of time, the other way. This is a point which we must believe, if we rightly believe God to be eternal, or know what eternity is; a point which would to God they had seriously and in heart considered, which have had God's eternal decree and the awards of it most frequently in their mouths and pens. As he is no Christian that would deny whatsoever is by God decreed was so decreed before all worlds; so is he no Christian philosopher, much less a true Christian divine, that shall refer or retract the tenor of this speech, *before all worlds*, to that only which is past before the world began. Whatsoever can be more properly said or con- 36
ceived to be past than to be yet to come, or to be in every moment of time designable, can have no property of eternity; for that only is eternal which always is, and so always is, that it hath precedence or preexistence infinite to all successions, which way soever we look upon them or take their beginning, whether backwards or forwards. It was a great oversight (or rather want of insight into the nature of this great sphere or visible world) in Lactantius, (otherwise a learned Christian,) not only to deny there were any antipodes, but to censure the philosophers (which had gone before him) of gross ignorance or infatuation, for avouching this truth, now manifested to meaner scholars or more illiterate Christians than any which Lac-

tantius taught. A greater ignorance it would be in us which acknowledge this truth, to say these antipodes were under the earth, and the inhabitants of Europe and Africa only above it; or that the heavens were as far under our antipodes as they are above us. For whosoever walks on the earth, whether in this region or that, whether at the half or full antipodes, is above the earth; and every part of the heavens unto which the looks of men are erected, as well the nadir as the zenith, as well the south pole as the north pole, is above the earth; and as the heavens are every way above the earth, so is eternity every way before all worlds, before all times. As we believe this visible world and all things in it had a beginning, so we expect it shall have an end: now the eye of eternal Providence looks through the world, through all the several ages, successions, or durations in the world, as well from the last end to their first beginning, as from their first beginning to their last end. There is no period of time to us imaginable which is not so environed by eternity as the earth or centre is with the heavens, save only that the heavens are finite, and eternity infinite; so that the heavens, though far every way, are no way infinitely above the earth; whereas eternity, or God's eternal decree, are every way infinitely before all worlds, before all times. In this sense, were it possible the world might have been created or motions continued from everlasting, the Eternal, notwithstanding, should have been everlastingly before them: for that period of motion which must terminate the next million of years shall have coexistence with eternity now existent, whose infinity doth not grow with succession, nor extend itself with motion, but stands immovable with times present, being eternally before times future as well in respect of any set draught or point whence

we imagine time future to come towards us, as in respect of the first revolution of the heavens whence time took beginning. Or, to speak as we think, it is impossible to conceive any duration to be without beginning and ending, without conceiving it circular, and altogether void of succession: notwithstanding, if any list to imagine time both ways everlasting, the continuity of it may be best conceived by the uninterrupted flux of an instant; and the stability of eternity, by the retraction of such a perpetual flux into one durable or permanent instant.

8. Or, not to suffer the remembrance of childish sports altogether to pass without any use or observation, if not for composing some greatest controversies amongst learned men, yet for facilitating contemplation in one of the greatest difficulties that philosophy, whether sacred or human, affords to the conceit of the most curious. The difficulty is, how eternity, being 37
permanent and indivisible, should have coexistence with succession or motion. We have seen a top turn so swiftly upon the same centre in a manner that it seemed rather to sleep or rest than to move; and whilst it thus swiftly moved, any bright mark or conspicuous spot, how little soever, seemed to be turned into an entire and permanent circle. Seeing motion thus swift may be procured by a weak arm, it will be no hard supposal to conceit that a mover of strength and vigour infinite should be able to move a body in a moment. Admit then the highest visible sphere should be moved about in a moment, all the several parts of successive motion which now it hath would be contracted into perfect unity: which whether it should be called a cessation from motion, or a vigorous rest, or a supermotion actually containing in it parts of motion successively infinite, were not so easy to deter-

mine. If thus it were moved about in an instant, the nature of it supposed to be incorruptible, and the mover immortal, remaining still in the same strength and mind, he would not move it more slowly this day or year than he did the former. This supposition admitted, there should be not only parts successively infinite of one revolution, but revolutions successively infinite in one and the same instant; or to speak more properly, as these revolutions should not properly be termed motion, but rather the product of motions infinitely swift, united or made up into a vigorous permanency; so should not the duration of one or of all these revolutions be accounted as an instant or portion of time, but a kind of eternity or duration indivisibly permanent. The motion of the eighth sphere supposed to be such as hath been said, that is, motion infinitely swift, or not divisible by succession; the sun, moving successively as now it doth, should have local coexistence to every star in the eighth sphere, to every point of the ecliptic circle wherein it moves, at one and the selfsame instant, or in every least parcel of time. Every star in the eighth sphere, every point, should be converted into a permanent circle; and so in one circle there should be circles for number infinite, as many circles as there be points or divisibilities in the ecliptic circle. Thus in him that is eternal are beings infinite, and in eternity are actually contained durations in succession infinite. The former supposition admitted, we could not say that the inferior orbs, moving as now they do, did move after the eighth sphere, but that the times of their motion were eminently contained in it; for the eighth sphere being moved in an instant, should lose the divisibility of time and the nature of motion, with all the properties that accompany them, not by defect, (as if it no way

comprised them,) but by swallowing up time, or division successively or potentially infinite, into an actual permanency. By this supposition of passive motion made infinitely swift by the strength of the mover, and improved into a kind of actual indivisible permanency, we may conceive of the first Mover's eternity as mathematicians conceive the true nature of a sphere, by imagining it to be produced by the motion of a semicircle upon the axis: for let the eternal be but thus imagined to be an intellectual sphere, capable of momentary motion or revolution throughout this world, and the indivisible coexistence of his infinity to every part of time and place will be very conceivable. Yet, as mathematicians persuade not themselves their figures are produced by motion, but rightly conceive their 38 nature to be such without production as if they were so produced; so let eternal duration be esteemed more indivisible than the unity of motion conceived as infinitely swift, yet not made indivisible by such swiftness of motion, but indivisible only of itself, and by the infinite vigour of his vital essence wherein all the perfection of motion or rest are (if I may so speak) indivisibly tempered, or (lest I should be mistaken) eminently contained. The same proportion which motion contracted into stability hath unto succession, hath divine essence to all other essences, eminently containing all, no one kind formally. This divine essence, whose essential property we conceive eternity to be, is truly the totality of being; [b]a totality not aggregated of parts, but rather (as Plotine intimates) producing all other parts or kinds of being. Eternity likewise is a totality of duration, not aggregated of parts, nor capable of access or addition; but rather a

[b] De hac duplice totalitate, vide Marsil. Ficinum ad 7. Plotin. lib. Ennead. 3.

totality from which all durations or successions flow, without resolution or diminution of its infinite integrity: as if a body should cast many shadows of divers shapes in a running stream, the shadows vanish and are repaired in every moment, without any diminution of the body.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Infinity of Divine Power.

1. THE circumstances of time and place are presupposed, the one as spectator, the other as stage to all things, which wanting place or time, or being itself, present themselves anew in their proper shape and form. But of things so presented, operation or power in their kind is the native and immediate property. Nothing that hath any proper seat or existence numerable in this spacious amphitheatre but is fitted for acting some part or other useful for the maintenance of the whole. Now all operation or power, which (according to the variety of things created) is manifold and diverse, doth give but such a shadow of that infinite power which is eminently contained in the union of infinite essence, as time and place did of his immensity and eternity. The force and virtue of some things may perhaps more properly be termed strength or power passive, than operation. Howbeit even in the earth and earthly bodies, by nature most dull, there is a power or strength to sustain weights laid upon them; a power to resist contrary impulsions, which perhaps essentially includes an active force or operation; a power of swaying to the centre, which is no more passive than active, but a mean betwixt both. Even in the dullest body that is, there is a secret force or slow activity to assimilate other things to themselves, or to preserve symbolizing natures. In bodies less gross,

and more unapt to resist violence offered, as in the winds, vapours, or exhalations, or in the spirits or influences which guide our bodies, we may perceive an active force or power motive fully answerable to the greatest passive strength or resistance. Other elements or mixed bodies are endued with an operative power of producing the like or destroying contraries. Celestial bodies, the sun especially, have a productive force to bring forth plants out of their roots, to nourish and continue life in all things. It is perhaps impossible for any thing that hath not being of itself to receive 39
infinity of being in any kind from another, though infinite: impossible for the fire, because the substance of it is finite, to be infinitely hot; but were it such, it would be infinite in operation.

2. As the Author or first setter forth of all things operative, who alone truly is, surpasseth all conceit of any distinct or numerable branch of being; so is his power more eminently infinite in every kind, than all the united powers of several natures, each supposed infinitely operative in its own kind, and for number likewise infinite, can be conceived to be. Now what was generally observed before, that things by nature most imperfect do oftentimes best shadow divine perfections, hath place again in this particular. God's infinite power is clearliest manifested in creatures which seem least powerful. *Where wast thou* (said God to Job[c]) *when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof?* The excellent majesty of this speech sufficiently testifies it was uttered by God him-

[c] Chap. xxxviii. 4—6.

self, though taken from his mouth by the pen of man. But setting aside the majestic phrase or resemblance, far surmounting all resemblance, all observance of poetical decorum, what clearer fountain of deeper admiration can the eye of man's understanding look into than this; that not only every corner-stone in the world with its full burden, but all the mighty buildings or erections which are seen upon the whole surface of the earth; yea the whole earth itself, with all the mountains and rocks upon it, with all the metals or massy substances that are within it, should be borne up by that which is less than any corner-stone, by that which indeed is no body or substance, not so much as a mere angle or corner? Yet so it hath pleased Him, by whose wisdom the foundations of the earth were laid, to make that little point or indivisible centre, which is farthest removed from our sight, the most conspicuous place and seat of that indivisible power which is infinite. Let mathematicians imagine what rules or reasons of equipendence they list, their last resolution of all supportance into the centre must suppose the same truth which the Egyptian magicians confessed, *Hic digitus Dei est*, "The finger of God is here." Impossible it were for that which in itself is matter of nothing impregnably to support all things supportable, unless it were supported by the finger of God; and yet if we conceive of him as Isaias describes him, all the strength and power that is manifested in the supportance of the whole earth, and all therein, is not the strength of his little finger. Yea though we should imagine, that as the weight of solids amounts according to their mass or quantity, so the sustentative force which is chambered up in the centre should be multiplied according to the several portions or divisibilities of magnitude successively immensurable; yet this

imagination of force so multiplied, it being divisible, could not equalize that true and real conceit of force divine which ariseth from consideration that it is indivisibly seated throughout immensity. To uphold earths innumerable much weightier and massier than this is, which, borne by him, beareth all things, would be no burden to his power sustentative; (so from the effects, his power, though in itself one, must receive from us plurality of denominations.) And yet fully commensurable to this power sustentative is his active strength or power motive. He that spans the heavens with his fist could toss this universe, with greater ease than a giant doth a tennis ball, throughout the boundless courts of immensity; rocks of adamant would sooner dissolve with the least fillip of his finger, than bubbles of water with the breath of cannons.

3. Our admiration of this his active power, which we conceive as incomprehensible, and altogether uncapable of increase, may be raised by calculating the imaginary degrees of active power's increase in creatures divisible, as well in quantity as operation. Though powder converted into smoke be the common mother of all force which issueth from the terrible mouth of the gun; yet the cannon sends forth his bullet (though more apt to resist external motion) with greater violence than the sachar; and every ordnance exceeds other in force of battery according to the quantity of the charge or length of barrel. But were it possible for the same quantity of steel or iron to be as speedily converted into such a fiery vapour as gunpowder is, the blow would be ten times more irresistible than any that gunpowder out of the same close concavity can make: the reason is plain: the more solid or massy the substance to be dissolved is, the greater quantity would it yield of fire, or other rarer

substance, into which it were dissolved; and the greater the quantity, the more violent is the contraction of it into the same narrow room; and the more violent the contraction is, the more vehement is the eruption, and the ejaculation swifter. Thus from vapours rarefied or generated in greater quantity than the concavities of the earth wherein they are imprisoned without vent are naturally capable of, do earthquakes become so terrible: these and the like experiments bring forth this general rule; The active strength of bodies multiplieth according to the manner of contraction or close unition of parts concurring to the impulsion or eruption: so doth the active force or vigour of motion always increase according to the degrees of celerity which it accumulates. Now though the most active and powerful essence cannot be encompassed with walls of brass, nor chambered up in vaults of steel, albeit much wider than the heavens; yet doth it every where more strictly gird itself with strength than the least or weakest body can be girt: for what bonds can we prescribe so strict, so close or firm, as is the bond of indivisible unity, which cannot possibly burst or admit eruption, wherein notwithstanding infinite power doth as entirely and totally encamp itself as in immensity? How incomparably then doth his active strength exceed all conceit or comparison! The vehemency of his motive power, whose infinite essence swallows up the infinite degrees of succession in a fixed instant, and of motion in vigorous rest, cannot be expressed by motion so swift and strong as would bear level from the sun setting in the west to the moon rising in the east. To cast the fixed stars down to the centre, or hoise the earth up to the heavens, within the twinkling of an eye, or to send both in a moment beyond the extremities of this visible world into the

womb of vacuity whence they issued, would not strain his power motive: for all this we suppose to be less than to bring nothing unto something, or something to such perfection, as some of his creatures enjoy: howbeit even such as take the fullest measure of perfection from his immensity, must derive their pedigree by the mother's side from mere nothing or vacuity: *Homo*, 41 saith St. Austin, *terræ filius, nihili nepos;* "Man is the son of the earth, and the grandchild of nothing." And when he shall come unto the height of his glory, he cannot forget, he must remember that the worm was his sister, and the creeping thing the son of his mother. To produce as many worlds out of nothing as the sun each year doth herbs or plants out of the moistened earth, would breed no cumbrance to his power or force productive. To maintain, repair, or continue all these in the same state, whilst he makes as many more, would neither exhaust nor hinder his conservative virtue. Multiplicity or variety greater than we can imagine of works most wonderful, all managed at one and the same time, could work no distraction in his thoughts, no defatigation in his essence. From the unity of these and the like branches of power, all in him most eminently infinite, doth the attribute of omnipotency take its denomination, whose contents, so far as they concern the strengthening of our faith, shall hereafter be unfolded.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Infinity of the Divine Wisdom. That it is as impossible for any Thing to fall out without God's Knowledge, as to have Existence without his Power or essential Presence.

1. BUT power in every kind thus eminently infinite could not be so omnipotent as we must believe it, did it not in this absolute unity of all variety possess

other branches of being, according to the like eminency or infinity of perfection. Strength or power, if merely natural, or destitute of correspondent wisdom to comprehend, manage, and direct it, might bring forth effects in their kind truly infinite, whose ill forecast or untowardly combinations nevertheless would, in the issue, argue lamentable impotency rather than omnipotency. And hard it would be to give instance, almost in any subject, wherein a double portion of wit, matched with half the strength, would not effect more, or more to the purpose, than a triple portion of strength with half so much wit. Archimedes did not come so far short of Polyphemus in strength or bulk of body, as the wonderful works wrought by his mathematical skill did exceed any that the giant could attempt.

2. Every choice is better or worse accordingly as it more or less participates of true wisdom; and most unwise should that choice justly be esteemed which would not give wisdom preeminence to power. Knowledge then, might wise men choose their own endowments, would be desired in greater measure than strength: *Wisdom* (saith the wise man) *is the beginning of the ways of God.* And shall not that branch of being, by which all things were made, by which every created essence hath its bounds and limits, be possessed by Him (who gave them being and set them bounds) without all bounds or limits, above all measure? Yes; whatsoever branch of being we could rightly desire or make choice of before others, the inexhaustible Fountain of being hath not chosen, but
42 is naturally possessed of, as the better. And therefore, if we may so speak, though both be absolutely infinite, his wisdom is greater than his power, to which it serves as guide or guardian. And as the

excellency of the artificer's skill often recompenses the defect of stuff or matter, so the infinity of wisdom or knowledge seems in a manner to evacuate the necessity of power or force distinct from it. Howbeit, I will not in this place, or in our native dialect, enter that nice dispute which some schoolmen have done, 'whether God's essence and knowledge be formally his power:' but whilst we conceive power and wisdom as two attributes formally distinct, at least to ordinary conceits, we may conceive wisdom to be the father and power the mother of all his works of wonder. As for Philo and other Platonics, that make knowledge the mother of all God's works, it is probable they dreamed of a created knowledge, or perhaps under these terms they cover some transformed notion of the second Person in Trinity, who is the Wisdom of the Father, by whom also he created all things; who, as he is the only begotten Son from eternity, so is he likewise a joint parent of all things created in time by the Father: as Eve was in some sort Adam's daughter, and yet a true mother of all that call him father. But here we speak not of that wisdom of God which is personal, but of the wisdom of the Godhead, as it is essentially and indivisibly infinite in the whole Trinity.

3. Wisdom, as all agree, is the excellency of knowledge, from which it differs not, save only in the dignity or usefulness of matters known, or in the more perfect manner of knowing them. Though no man be wise without much knowledge, yet a man may know many things, and not be very wise. But if we speak of knowledge divine, not as restrained in our conceit to this or that particular, but simply as it comprehends all things, the name of wisdom in every respect best befits it; for though many things known

by him whilst compared with others more notable seem base and contemptible, yet not the meanest but may be an object of divine contemplation to a Christian, that considers not the mere matter or form or physical properties, but the Creator's power or skill manifested in it. How much more may the vilest creature, whilst he looks upon his own work in it, and the use whereto he appointed it, be rightly reputed excellent! He knows as much of every creature as can be known of it, and much more than man possibly can know: and thus he knoweth not only all things that are, but all that possibly may be. This argues wisdom truly infinite, whose right conceit must be framed by those broken conceits which we have of the model of it.

4. Of wisdom, then, or useful knowledge, the parts or offices are two: the one, steadfastly to propose a right end; the other, to make and prosecute a right choice of means for effecting it. Human wisdom is ofttimes blind in both, and usually lame in the latter. Neither can we clearly discern true good from apparent; nor do our consultations always carry even, to the mistaken marks whereat we aim; but be the end proposed good or bad, so it be much affected, the less choice of means is left, the more eagerly we apply ourselves unto their use, and strive as it were to strain out success by close embracing them: and for this reason, ignorance, or want of reason to forecast variety of means for bringing about our much-desired ends, is the mother of self-will and impatience. For what is self-will, if a man should define it, but a stiff
43 adherence to some one or few particular means, neither only nor chiefly necessary to the main point? And wits, conscious of their own weakness for conquering what they eagerly desire, presently call in power,

wrath, or violence, as partial or mercenary seconds to assist them. Whereas he that out of fertility of invention can furnish himself beforehand with store of likely means for accomplishing his purpose, cannot much esteem the loss or miscarriage of some one or two. Howbeit, as man's wit in this case is but finite, so his patience cannot be complete. Even the wisest will be moved to wrath or violence, or other foul play, if the game whereat he shoots be fair and good, and most of his strings already broken; nor can he be absolutely secure of good success so long as the issue is subject to contingency, and may fall without the horizon of his foresight and contrivance. But wisdom infinite doth completely arm the Omnipotent Majesty (if I may so speak) with infinite patience and long-suffering towards such as every minute of their lives violently thwart and cross some or other particular means which he had ordained for his glory and their good. *He is light*, saith the apostle, *and in him is no darkness.* He distinguisheth the fruits of light from fruits of darkness before they are, even before he gave them possibility of being. As impossible it is for his will to decline from that which he discerns to be truly good, as for his infinite essence to shrink in being. Many things may (as every thing that is evil doth) fall out against his will, but nothing without his knowledge or besides his expectation. That which in its own nature (as being made such by his unalterable decree) is absolutely contingent, is not casual in respect of his providence or eternal wisdom. In that he fully comprehends the number of all means possible, and can mix the several possibilities of their miscarriage in what degree or proportion he list, he may, and ofttimes doth, inevitably forecast the full accomplishment of his proposed ends by multiplicity

of means in themselves not inevitable but contingent. So that success is only necessary to the last, yet not absolutely necessary unto it. All the necessity it hath is ofttimes gotten by casual miscarriage of the possibilities bestowed upon the former; as, if he ordained the apprehension of a traitor or of a malefactor by a hundred means, all by the immutable decree alike possible and equally probable; if ninety and nine do miss, the hundredth and last, by the rules of eternal wisdom, must of necessity take: but in that it was possible for the former to have taken, success falls to this last, not by absolute necessity, but as it were by lot; for it might have been prevented by the former, by supposal only of whose miscarriage it is now necessary. And yet success itself, or the accomplishment of the end proposed by infinite wisdom, was absolutely necessary and immutable.

5. There is a fallacy, though the simplest one that ever was set to catch any wise man, wherein many excellent wits of these latter ages, with some of the former, have been pitifully entangled. The snare, wherein it were not possible for any besides themselves to catch them, they thus frame or set: 'Whatsoever God hath decreed must of necessity come to pass: but God hath decreed every thing that is: therefore every thing that is comes to pass of necessity. All things are necessary, at least in respect of God's decree.' The extract or corollary whereof, in brief, is this: 'It is impossible for aught, that is not, to be; for aught that hath been, not to have been; for aught that is, not to be; impossible for aught to be here-
44 after, that shall not be.' But if it be (as here I suppose) very consonant to infinite wisdom, altogether necessary to infinite goodness, and no way impossible for infinite power, to decree contingency as well as

necessity; or that some effects should be as truly contingent as others are necessary; a conclusion quite contradictory to that late inferred will be the only lawful issue of the former maxim, or major proposition matched with a minor of our choosing. Let the major proposition stand as it did before, 'Whatsoever God hath decreed must of necessity come to pass,' with this additional, 'Nothing can come to pass otherwise than God hath decreed it shall or may come to pass:' the minor proposition, which (if our choice may stand) shall be consort to the major, is this: 'But God hath decreed contingency as well as necessity;' or, 'that some effects should be as truly contingent as others are necessary: therefore of necessity there must be contingency, or effects contingent.' The immediate consequence whereof is this: 'There is an absolute necessity that some things which have not been, might have been; that some things which have been, might not have been; that some things which are not, might be; that some things which are, might not be; that some things which shall not be hereafter, might be; that some things which shall be hereafter, might not be.' But as ill weeds grow apace, so the late mentioned error once conceived was quickly delivered of a second, which derived the infallible certainty of God's foreknowing things future, from an infallible necessity, as they conceived it, laid upon them, before they had being, by his immutable decree. But every wise decree presupposeth wisdom, and wisdom essentially includeth knowledge: shall we then grant that God's knowledge is antecedent, and his foreknowledge consequent to his decrees? or shall we say that he did inevitably decree the obliquity of Jewish blasphemy against his Son, because he did most certainly foreknow it? or,

that he did therefore certainly foreknow it, because he had irresistibly decreed it? Most certain it is, that he did as perfectly foresee or foreknow all the obliquities of their malice and blasphemy against Christ, as he did their very acts or doings, if those could be distinguished from their acts or doings. Briefly, to admit the former conclusion, 'that the Eternal foreknows all things, because he decrees them; or, that they are absolutely necessary in respect of his decree,' were to imprison his infinite wisdom in his self-fettered power; to restrain the Eternal Majesty from using such liberty in his everlasting decrees as some earthly monarchs usurp in causes temporal or civil: for, *Papa nunquam ligat sibi manus;* "The pope," as they say, "never tieth his own hands by any grant or patents;" which is a fault in him, only because he is otherwise very faulty, and unsufficient to support or wield so high a prerogative with upright constancy; but in that holy and mighty One the reservation of such liberty (as anon we intimate) is a point of high perfection.

6. That to be able to decree an absolute contingency as well as necessity is an essential branch of omnipotency, or power infinite, shall (by the assistance of this power) be clearly demonstrated in the article of Creation: that God did omnipotently decree a contingency in human actions, that the execution of this decree is a necessary consequent of his communicative goodness, (a consequent so necessary, that unless this be granted we cannot acknowledge him to be truly good, much less infinitely good,) shall (by the favour of this his goodness) be fully declared in the treatise of man's fall, and of sin's entrance into the world by it. That which in this place we take as granted, is, that God's wisdom is no less infinite than his power; that

he perfectly foreknows whatsoever by his omnipotency can be done; that his power and wisdom are fully commensurable to his immensity and eternity; that all these rules following are exactly parallel in true divinity:— 45

God's presence is not circumscriptible by the coexistence of his creatures: he is in every one of them as a centre; and all of them are in him as in a circumference, capable, not of them only, but of all that possibly can be; only uncapable of circumscription or equality.

His eternity is more than commensurable to time, or any duration of created entities: it is in every duration as a permanent instant; and all durations are contained in it as a fluent instant in a set time, or as noontide in the whole day.

His power likewise may not be confined to effects that are, have been, or shall be: the production of every thing out of nothing argues it to be truly infinite; and yet the production of all is to the infinity of it not so much as a beam of light which is strained through a needle's eye is to the body of the sun, or to all the light diffused throughout the world.

Least of all may his infinite wisdom be comprehended within those effects which by his power have been produced, or which it now doth or hereafter shall produce. But look how far his immensity exceeds all real or complete space; or his eternity succession, or the duration of things created; or his power all things already reduced from possibility to actual existence: so far doth his infinite wisdom surmount the most exact knowledge that can be imagined of all things already created, and their actions. Nothing that is could have borne any part in the world without the

light or direction of his knowledge; and yet that measure of his knowledge which can be gathered from the full harmony of this universe is less in respect of it, absolutely considered, than skill to number digits is to the entire or exact knowledge of all proportions, or other arithmetical rules or affections, that can arise from their multiplications or divisions. The causes, properties, and hidden virtues of each thing created are better known to him than so much of them as we see or perceive by any other sense is to us: and yet he knows whatsoever by infinite power possibly might have been, but now is not, whatsoever hereafter may be, though it never shall be, as perfectly as he doth the things which at this instant are, heretofore have been, or hereafter must be.

7. The subject wherein this his incomprehensible wisdom exhibits the most lively and surest apprehensions, for drawing our hearts after it in admiration, is the harmony or mixture of contingency with necessity. And this, most conspicuous in moderating the free thoughts of men or angels, and ordaining them to the certain and necessary accomplishment of his glory. The contingent means which by his permission and donation these creatures may use for attaining their several ends, or private good, may be successively infinite; and yet, albeit the utmost possibilities of their varieties and inconstancies were reduced to act, the ends notwithstanding, which his infinite wisdom hath forecast in their creation, should by any course of many thousands, which they may take, be as inevitably brought to pass as if no choice or freedom had been left them; or as if every succeeding thought had been drawn on by the former, and all linked to that which he first inspired, or by his irresistible power produced, with indissoluble chains of adamantine fate.

We would esteem it great wisdom or cunning (to use St. Austine's illustration) in a fowler to be able to catch again all the birds which he had formerly 46
caught, after he had permitted every one of them to take wings and fly which way they listed. God hath nets every where spread, for catching such as his wisdom suffers to fly farthest from him, or most to decline the ways which in his goodness he had appointed for them; and (which is most of all to be admired) the very freedom or variety of men's thoughts, so they be permitted to employ them according to their own liking, becomes their most inevitable and most inextricable snare; for all their thoughts are actually numbered in his infinite wisdom, and the award of every thought determinately measured, or defined by his eternal decree. So far is freedom of choice or contingency from being incompatible with the immutability of God's will, that without this infinite variety of choice or freedom of thought in man and angels, we cannot rightly conceive him to be as infinitely wise as his decree is immutable.

8. Free it was for me to have thought or done somewhat in every minute of the last year, whereby the whole frame of my cogitations or actions for this year following might have been altered; and yet should God have been as true and principal a cause of this alteration, and of every thought and deed thus altered, as he is of those that *de facto* are past, or of that which I now think or do. Nor should his will or pleasure (as some object) depend on mine; but mine, though contingently free, necessarily subject unto his: for unto every cogitation possible to man or angel he hath everlastingly decreed a proportionate end; to every antecedent possible a correspondent

consequent, which needs no other cause or means to produce it, but only the reducing of possibility, granted by his decree, into act. For what way soever (of many equally possible) man's will doth incline, God's decree is a like necessary cause of all the good or evil that befalls him for it. Did we that which we do not, but might do, many things would inevitably follow which now do not. Nor do the things which at this instant befall me come to pass because he absolutely decreed them, and none but them (as we say), in the first place, but because he decreed them as the inevitable consequents of some things which he knew I would do, which notwithstanding he both knew and had decreed that I might not have done. For whatsoever I should have done, and have left undone, there was a real possibility to have done it, though not inherent in me, yet intituled unto me in particular by God's decree, until some demerit of mine or my forefathers did cut off the entail and interrupt the successful influence. For here I will not dispute how far the sins of parents may prejudice their children; but these terms *should* or *might*, being referred to matters of duty, are as infallible signs in divinity as in grammar of a potential: what we *should* have done or *might* have done was possible for us to have done, by that decree whence all power and possibility, not merely logical, is derived. So, then, both that which might befall me if I did otherwise, and that which now befalls me doing as I do, flow alike immediately from the absolute necessity of his eternal decree; whose incomprehensible wisdom herein appears most admirable, that though the variety in this kind were infinite, yet should it comprehend all; not one thing could fall without the actual circumference of it.

9. The general reason why most Christian writers

are more able and apt both to conceive right, and to speak more consequently to what they rightly con- 47
ceive, concerning other branches of divine absolute infiniteness, than concerning his infinite knowledge, is, because all creatures, without exception, are true participants of God's other attributes, besides his wisdom or knowledge. For even the meanest creature, the worm or gnat, hath a portion of that being, of that power, of that duration, which in him are infinite; and that portion of these attributes which they have, or that quantity of being which they have, is a participation of his immensity. But of his knowledge or wisdom, men and angels (the manner of whose knowledge is to men for the most part unknown) are of all his creatures the only participants. And (as hath been observed before) those rules are always the most clear and certain, and most easily gathered, which are gathered from an uniform identity of particulars in variety of subjects. Those universal rules, on the contrary, are hardly gathered, or, without accurate observation, are less certain, which can be experienced only in some one or fewer subjects. Another special reason why we do not conceive so magnificently or so orthodoxally of God's knowledge as were fitting, is, because we want fit terms to express them in: for seeing words are taken as the proper vesture of our thoughts and conceits; and seeing most men are apt to conceive or judge rather according to the vesture or outward appearance of things, than according to the inward truth, it is almost impossible for us not to transform the manner of God's knowledge or decrees into the similitude of our own conceits, conjectures, or resolutions, so long as we put no other vesture or expressions upon God's decree or knowledge than were fitted for our own. To salve this inconve-

nience, or to prevent the occasion of this error, St. Gregory moves this doubt [c]: 'How we can say there is any prescience or foreknowledge in God, seeing only those things can be properly said to be foreknown which are to come: whereas we know that nothing is future unto God, before whose eye no things are past: things present do not pass by him; things future do not come upon him. Whatsoever hath been to us is yet in his view; and whatsoever is present may rather be said to be known than foreknown.' To the same purpose St. Austine would have God's knowledge of things which are to come to be termed rather *science* than *prescience* or foresight, seeing all things are present to God. But these two great lights of the Latin church, with some others that follow these for their guides, have not in this argument expressed themselves so clearly or so accurately as that their expressions can pass without question or exception in the schools. We may not say (nor did St. Austine or St. Gregory, as I presume, think) that God doth not see or know a distinction between times past, present, or to come, more clearly than we do. If, then, he distinguish times present from times past or future, how is it said by St. Gregory that nothing to him is future, nothing past? If these differences

[c] Quomodo est præscius, dum nulla nisi quæ futura sunt, præsciantur? Et scimus quia Deo futurum nihil est, ante cujus oculos præterita nulla sunt, præsentia non transeunt, futura non veniunt: quippe quia omne quod nobis fuit et erit, in ejus prospectu presto est; et omne quod præsens est, scire potest potius quam præscire.—Greg. lib. 20. §. 63. in Job. cap. 30. Et paulo post, In illo, nec præterita, nec futura reperiri queunt, sed cuncta mutabilia immutabiliter durant; et quæ in seipsis simul existere non possunt, illi simul omnia assistunt, nihilque in illo præterit quod transit: quia in æternitate ejus modo quodam incomprehensibili, cuncta volumina sæculorum transeuntia manent, currentia stant.—Vide Petrum Damianum in Ep. 4. de omnipotentia, et Ludovicum Ballaster Hierologiæ, cap. 3.

of time or of succession be real, the Eternal knows these differences much better than we do; and if he know a difference between things present, past, and to come, to be present, past, or to come is not all one in respect of his eternal knowledge. If God (as all grant) be before all worlds, his knowledge, being co-48
eternal to his being, must needs be before all worlds. And St. Austin himself grants a *scientia*, a science or knowledge in God most infallible of all things that have been, are, or shall be, before they are, were, or could be; for they could not be coeternal to him, who is before all worlds, the beginning of the world itself, and of all things in it. Now all knowledge of things not yet present, but to come, is foreknowledge; to determine or decree things future, is to pre-determine or fore-decree them. And seeing God from eternity hath both known and decreed the things that then were not, he is said to have foreknown and fore-decreed them: so, then, God foreknows and man fore-knows; God hath decreed and man hath decreed. But the difference between the manner of their fore-knowing and decreeing being not ofttimes well expressed by learned writers or teachers, and seldom duly considered by their readers or hearers, the identity of words wherewith we express our own fore-knowledge and God's foreknowledge begets a similitude of conceit, or will hardly suffer us rightly to conceive the true difference between the nature and manner of human wisdom and wisdom divine. And this hath been the fertile nursery of many errors in this argument, which now and hereafter we shall endeavour to displant; imitating the heralds, who are often enforced to give the same coat to divers parties, but always with some difference remarkable to such as are conversant in the mysteries of their art.

10. Our knowledge of things to come is many ways imperfect (and foreknowledge only), because the duration neither of our knowledge nor of ourselves as yet can reach unto that point of time wherein things so known get first existence. We look on them as on things afar off, which we expected to meet; for as things past resemble movables going from us, so things future seem to come upon us; and whiles they get being which before they had not, we get continuance of being and of knowledge which before we had not; that is, we gain a real coexistence with them; for if the days or thread of our life should be cut off before the things foreknown by us come to pass or get actual being, we could not possibly have coexistence with them: such being or duration as they have is too short the one way, and our existence too short the other way, to make up this knot or bond of mutual relation which we call coexistence: there must be on our part a continuation or lengthening of that existence which we have; and on their part a growth into that actual being which whilst they are merely future they have not, before we and they can be truly said to exist together. Now if we shall mould the manner of God's foreknowledge of things future in our own conceit or foreknowledge of them, we shall erroneously collect, that, seeing we cannot infallibly foreknow future contingents, so neither could they be infallibly foreknown by God, if to him or in respect of his decree they were contingents, and not necessarily predetermined.

And some there be which push our proneness to this error forward by another. Not distinguishing between contingency and uncertainty, they argue thus:

That which is in itself uncertain cannot certainly be known:

Every future contingent is in itself uncertain:

Ergo, it is not possible that a future contingent should certainly be known.

But they consider not that there is a twofold uncertainty; one, formally relative; another, only denomina- 49
tive or fundamental. That which is relatively uncertain cannot be certainly known; for so it should be certain to him to whom it is uncertain. But a future contingent, as it is contingent, doth not necessarily or formally include this relative uncertainty, although it usually be in part the foundation or co-founder of it: for relative uncertainty, or that uncertainty which is so termed with relation unto knowledge, results partly from the nature of the object, suppose a future contingent or event mutable; partly, and more principally, from the imperfection of the knowledge in respect of which it is said uncertain. But the same effect or event, which is in part the foundation of uncertainty with respect to finite or unperfect knowledge, may be the distinct or proper object of knowledge in itself infallible, or of knowledge infinite. Now if we grant that there is any knowledge in itself infallible, we cannot imagine that any thing possible (yet is every future contingent, though we consider it as contingently future, possible) should be uncertain unto such knowledge. We should again consider, that the Eternal Providence doth neither know nor foreknow contingents future by interposed or expiring acts, but by interminable and eternal knowledge, in which there is no succession, nothing future, nothing past. And without the interposition of some determining or expiring acts, there can be no error in men: no man

errs while he is in the search of truth, or whilst he suspends his judgment. Take then away the imperfection of our knowledge or judgment whilst it is in suspense, which is ignorance rather than error, and it better resembles divine knowledge than our actual resolutions or determinations do.

11. The best knowledge which we can have of things contingent is but conjectural; and of things merely casual we cannot have so much as a true conjectural knowledge, for those things we term *casual* which are without the reach or sphere of our forecast or conjecture. And hence it is that the actual exhibition of any event, whether casual or contingent, doth always actuate, increase, or perfect our knowledge. The true reason why we cannot certainly foreknow events contingent is because our essence and knowledge are but finite; so that things contingent are not so contained in us, that if we could perfectly know ourselves, we might perfectly know them. But in the Divine Essence all real effects, all events possible, whether necessary, casual, or contingent, are eminently contained, the perfect knowledge of his own essence necessarily includes the perfect knowledge, not only of all things that have been, are, or shall be, but of all things that might have been or possibly may be. For as God's essence is present in every place, as it were an ubiquitary centre, so is his eternity or infinite duration indivisibly coexistent to every part of succession, and yet withal is round about it. He it is that drives things future upon us, being from eternity as well beyond them as on this side of them. Though he should create other creatures without the circumference of this world, they should be all within his presence, without which it is impossible aught besides him should have any existence; yet should he not properly

gain any new existence in them, but only take a denomination of coexistence with them; because they have existence in him, which before they had not. Thus, admitting the branches of contingency or indifferent possibilities never reduced to act, to be in our apprehension numberless; yet whensoever any thing comes to pass which might not have been, it cannot fall without the sphere of God's actual knowledge, which is fully commensurable to eternity and immensity; and therefore is not only coexistent to every successive act, but doth environ whole succession. And whether of such things as possibly may be, more or fewer be reduced to act, nothing accrues to eternal knowledge, no new act can be produced in it by the casual event; but only that which was eternally known, having now gotten actual coexistence with eternity, bestows this extrinsical denomination upon the eternal Creator, 'It was foreknown from eternity;' that is, in plain language, known when it was not, by him that more properly always indivisibly is, than was before it; and being such, his knowledge of things which in respect of us are only future and foreknown, doth as truly resemble or rather contain our knowledge of things past or present as of things to come. Now for us to apprehend a thing past under the nature of a thing contingent is not impossible. And though we certainly know it to be already past, yet this certainty of our knowledge doth not persuade us that it came to pass certainly or inevitably; but is very compatible with our conceit of its contingency or casual production whilst it was present. Our knowledge of such things past or present is necessary, but the event itself is not therefore necessary, nor to be termed necessary in respect of our knowledge. Much less may we say, either that contingent effects are necessary, or that no

effects are not necessary, in respect of God's decree or foreknowledge of them. For if we believe that God's foreknowledge of all events to come, be they of what kind they possibly may be, is more clear and more infallible than our best knowledge of things past or present; the necessary infallibility of his knowledge can neither add any degree of necessity to the nature of the events foreknown, nor take one jot of contingency from them. God should not be absolutely infinite either in essence or in knowledge, if the absolute infallibility of his foreknowledge, or the impossibility of his not erring in his predictions, were in itself grounded upon, or to be inferred by us, from the absolute necessity of the event, rather than from the absolute infinity of his wisdom. For those effects which being otherwise in their nature contingent it is in our power (by God's permission, by circumspection and forecast) to alter, by laying a necessity upon them which before they had not, we are able (after this necessity laid upon them by ourselves) infallibly to foreknow and foretell, albeit our knowledge still remain but finite. Now that some events which are to-day in themselves and by God's decree truly contingent, may by our industry and circumspection become to-morrow truly necessary, no intelligent Christian divine will (I hope) deny; or if any do deny it, we shall be able (by God's assistance) positively to demonstrate the truth of this our assertion, and withal demonstrate the dangerous inconveniences of the contradictory opinion, in the treatise of Divine Providence. In the mean time, to finish this principal stem of Divine Providence, to wit, his infinite wisdom, and the dependence which things temporal have upon his eternal knowledge; succession we imagine as a scroll containing several columns of contingency or indifferent possi-

bilities; of which only so many, or so much of any, as in revolution of time take ink, and are unfolded, become visible to men and angels. But the Almighty looketh on all things, as well from that end of time which is to come, as from that which is past; his infinite and eternal wisdom doth not only encompass all things 51
that come to pass, as the circumference doth the centre, but penetrates the whole scroll of succession from end to end, and from corner to corner, more clearly than the sun's brightness doth the perspicuous or purified air. Those columns of mere possibilities never actuated, which his finger from eternity hath drawn in characters secret and invisible to his creatures, are alike distinct and legible to his glorious eye, as those others whose first draught, being as secretly and invisibly fashioned by him, man or other second causes by his concourse fill with actual or sensible existence, as the embroiderer doth the drawer's obscure pattern with conspicuous branches of silk, gold, or silver.

12. But lest we may be thought to read the ancients with no greater reverence than we do some modern writers from whom we freely dissent, without any impulsion of envy or vainglory, let us, for conclusion of this long discourse, a little reflect upon the testimonies before avouched out of St. Austin, and out of St. Gregory. The truth, then, at which these two learned fathers aimed, and which, in the charitable construction of such as read them with reverence, they did not miss, may be fully comprised in these observations following, which are but necessary extracts of what hath hitherto been delivered. Whereas St. Gregory saith, "Unto God nothing is past, nothing to come;" the true construction of his meaning is, that in God's knowledge of things past, present, or to come, there is *nihil futurum*, *nihil præteritum*, no such difference of

time or duration as we express by these words, *future* or *past*; for it always is, and so perfectly always is, that nothing can be added to it by succession or variety of events, be they necessary, casual, or contingent. But as his eternal knowledge of all things doth not make all things which he knows to be eternal, (no not in respect of his eternal decree or knowledge, for he eternally decrees and knows things temporal and mutable,) so neither doth the immutable or absolute certainty of his knowledge make all things so known by him to be immutable or absolutely necessary, either in themselves or in respect of his eternal knowledge. Only this we are bound to believe, and this is all that we may in this argument safely say, "God's knowledge of things mutable and unnecessary is absolutely necessary, because absolutely infinite." Again, it is most true which St. Gregory saith, that things future do not come upon God as they do upon us; that things present do not pass by him or from him as they do from us. Whilst things present pass from us, we likewise pass from them; for we continually lose that portion of duration or coexistence which we had with them, always gaining, whilst our glass is in running, a new *erit* or link of coexistence with that which is next to come. Nothing, in this sense, can pass by God or from God, because he always is, and the manner of his duration is indivisible: he cannot lose any existence by antiquity, nor gain any new portion of duration by everlasting continuance. Times passing exonerate themselves into the ocean of his infinite duration without enlarging it; times coming incessantly flow from it without diminution of it. Times future, again are said to come upon us, or to meet us, because our duration or existence cannot reach to future things whilst they are future: the very angels are not of so long

standing or duration to-day, as they shall be to-morrow: unless things future did come towards them, and as it were meet them, they should have no co-52
existence with them. In this sense, times future cannot be said to come upon God, because he always is, and exists every way before them. His duration is yesterday, to-day, to-morrow, the same for ever; and every way the same without addition of quantity, without alteration of nature or quality, and in it are all things that are. So much of being as things future can be said to have, they have it in him and from him; so much of being as there remains of things past, remaineth in him; and things present, even presence itself, cannot for a moment subsist without him.

CHAP. IX.

Of Divine Immutability.

1. WITH these stems of divine perfection hitherto expressed, another presents itself to our contemplation which some schoolmen have moulded in the same conceit with eternity, of which others conceive it to be the offspring. Us it sufficeth, that the true explication of the former confirms the truth of this attribute whose brief explication we now seek; and perhaps, if I should speak properly, the knowledge of it is the offspring of our right knowledge of the former. The attribute itself, whose truth in former disputes hath been supposed, is divine immutability; which may be thus demonstrated:

2. All mutation supposeth a defect or imperfection either in respect of the term whence or into which the change is made, and therefore can have no place in absolute or abstract perfection, or in essence infinite. More particularly, all mutation or change is either in essence, in quantity, in place, or in quality; under which we comprehend all vital endeavours, all acts of

the will or understanding. In essence or nature, it is impossible the totality and fountain of essence should admit any change; as impossible for him which hath no author of being not to be always what he is, as for that which now is not, to take his being to itself: unto infinite perfection (for such he is) what can accrue? On the other side, nothing can fall from it, but must fall into him, seeing he is in being infinite; and in that he filleth every place by his essential presence, it is impossible he should move from place to place, or be carried by any circular motion, being indivisibly and totally in every space that can be imagined. And as his immensity could not be extended or contracted by extension of new magnitudes or by diminution or annihilation of the old, so neither can his eternity be shortened or lengthened by continuation of succession, or expiration of time or motion. Power, in like sort, truly infinite, can admit no intension or remission in endeavours, but moveth all things without motion, and worketh all things without labour or toil inherent; for all things are made and brought to nothing by his sole will or word. Nor speaks he aught which from eternity he hath not spoken; albeit succeeding ages have still new messengers of his eternal will and word. *All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but*
53 *the word of the Lord endureth for ever.* And yet this was that word of the gospel which seemed then first to be preached unto them.

3. All the difficulty wherewith flesh and blood in this article are usually assaulted, or seem to themselves to be beset, is, how his will or counsel should be eternally immutable, and yet everlastingly free; but supposing what we often promise, and once for all (by his

assistance) shall undoubtedly prove, that absolute contingency or possibilities equipendent betwixt many effects may as truly be the object of his eternal decree, as necessity in other works of nature; I see not what appearance of difficulty can present itself to such as bear the two former principles before-mentioned level in their minds and thoughts; the one, that God is absolute infinite in being; the other, that he is absolutely perfect, according to all the branches of being or perfection by us conceivable; or more than all these, perfection itself. Now in things that have any better portion of being wherein they can truly delight, it is, to our apprehension, a degree or portion of perfection to have an immutable state of such being; an imperfection, to be subject to alteration or change; but whether their estate be mutable or immutable, it is a greater perfection to be free in their operations, than to be restrained to some one or few particulars, without any choice or variety of subjects, wherein they may exercise their operative faculties. Brutish or merely sensitive creatures have a delectable kind of being whose continuance they desire, but without all variety of choice or desire of any better being, although the best being they have be subject to alteration or change. Men are free in their operations, but mutable and subject to alterations, as well in their nature as in their operations, or in the objects of their freedom; and yet are more excellent than the visible heavens, which are not obnoxious to alteration or corruption; so that if the heavens, or other incorruptible substances, had their freedom of choice, which men have, they would be more perfect and excellent creatures than man is; or, if man were as immortal as they are, he would be incomparably more perfect than they can be, without the freedom of choice or will, which (as we

now suppose) is the inseparable consequent or companion of reason, or intellectual knowledge; but, though freedom be in itself a great perfection, yet to be free to do evil is a branch of imperfection which springs from the mutability of the creature's freedom. And this their mutability, though in itself an imperfection, yet is an imperfection necessarily prerequired or presupposed to the perfection of the creature; for no creature can be truly perfect by nature, but by the will and pleasure of the Creator; and it his will and pleasure to make them mutable before they be immutably happy. But the Creator of all things, in that he is absolutely perfect, even perfection itself, is essentially immutable, essentially free, and immutably happy, because infinitely good. Yet if we compare these attributes amongst themselves, immutability is the ground or supporter, not the crown or perfection of freedom, but freedom rather the perfection of immutability. Yet were freedom in itself, how perfect and complete soever it were, no absolute perfection, unless it were immutably wedded unto goodness. Absolute immutability and absolute freedom may very well stand together, even in our conceits, so they be rightly joined or sorted. To be freely immutable implies a contradiction, if not unto the nature of immutability, yet
54 unto the nature of absolute perfection, or to our true conceit of infinite being. To be freely immutable is a branch of imperfection or impotency, which might put all those perfections which are contained in that nature which is no otherwise than freely immutable upon the hazard: if the Divine Essence were freely immutable, or free in respect of his immutability, whether of nature or goodness, it were possible for him to put off these two attributes, and to clothe himself with mutability, which is always charged with possibility of

doing amiss; but to be immutably free is no point of imperfection, but rather the period of perfection; and necessarily infers this perfection (which we call freedom) to be as unchangeable as the attributes of power, of wisdom, of eternity, or goodness are. The excellency of his nature and essence necessarily includes an eternal liberty or freedom in the exercise of his omnipotent power, and in the influence or communication of his goodness; free it is for him, from everlasting to everlasting, omnipotently to decree as well a mutability in the actions of some things created, as a necessity or immutability in the course or operation of nature inanimate: that the course of man's life, or the final doom awarded to every man, (though that must be awarded unto all according to the diversity of their courses,) should be immutable, because they are foreset by an immutable omnipotent decree, hath no more colour of truth than to say, the omnipotent Creator must needs be black, because he made the crows and ebony black; or white, because he made the snow and swans white; or green and yellow, because he made the gold yellow and the popinjays green; or that he should be of all colours because the rainbow is his creature. Let us believe then that he is everlastingly and immutably free to make creatures of what kind it pleaseth him, that he hath printed a resemblance of his freedom in the mutability of this inferior world, and hath left a model of his immutability in the celestial and immortal substances; but the more immutable he is, the more irresistible we conceive his power to be; or the greater his wisdom is, the less preventable the contrivances of it are; the worse it would be with such as have to deal with him, were not his goodness (which is the rule of his eternal decree) immutably as great as he himself or his other attributes are.

CHAP. X.

Of the Eternal and Immutable Decree.

1. FROM all or most of the former speculations, concerning the several branches of the divine attributes or perfections, somewhat may be gathered not unuseful for rectifying or bettering our apprehensions of God's absolute and omnipotent decree; a point though in all ages most difficult, yet in this age become so common, and so far extended, that no divine can adventure upon any other service profitable for the present estate of Christ's militant church, but he shall be enforced either to make his passage through it, or come so nigh unto it that he must in good manners do homage unto it. That this decree is for its tenor immutable, (if we take it in the abstract, or as it is in
55 God,) is clear from the attribute last handled; that the same decree is irresistible in its executions, or that the things decreed are inevitable, is evident from the attribute of God's infinite power or omnipotency; that this immutable, irresistible decree is eternal, or before all times, no man questions. Yet is it not agreed upon by all, either what a decree is, or what it is to be eternal; at least the most part do not perfectly bear in mind the true importances of an eternal decree. To this purpose have the former speculations concerning eternity and God's infinite wisdom been premised, lest, by the incogitant use of these and the like scripture phrases, "God foreknows or hath decreed all things from eternity," that slumber might creep upon the unvigilant or unattentive reader, with whose dreams many deceived have thought and spoken of God's decree or predetermination of things to come, as of acts already irrevocably finished and accomplished; and by

a consequent error resolve that it is as impossible for any thing to be otherwise than it is, will be, or hath been, as it is to recall that again which is already past. In which conceit, though they do not expressly speak or think it, they necessarily involve thus much, 'That God by his eternal and powerful decree did set the course of nature a-going with an irresistible and unretractable swinge, and since only looks upon it with an awful eye, as masters sometimes watch their servants whether they go the way they are commanded.' But it is a rule in divinity, not contradicted, for aught I know, by any Christian, that there is altogether as great need and use of power and wisdom infinite to manage the world, as there was at first to make it: *Pater meus usque modo operatur*, (saith the Wisdom of God,[e]) *et ego operor; My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* And as he ceaseth not to work, so doth he never cease to decree: *Operatur omnia secundum consilium voluntatis suæ*[f]*; He worketh all things according to the counsel of his will.* So that albeit the counsel of his will by which he worketh be eternal, yet all things are not yet wrought by it. Shall we say then, he hath not decreed whatsoever doth or shall befall us? Yes, in this sense we may; he doth not now first begin to decree them, but inasmuch as his decrees have no end, we should remember withal that he now decrees them. And it were much safer for every man in particular to look on God's decree concerning himself as present or coexistent to his whole course of life, rather than on it as it was before the world or in Adam; for so we shall think of it as of an act past and finished, which hath denounced sentence upon us more irrevocable than the laws of the Medes and Persians. Howbeit even these laws whiles they were

[e] John v. 17. [f] Ephes. i. 11.

in making suppose that liberty in their makers which they utterly took from them being once enacted.

2. God's decrees are like theirs in that they are in themselves unalterable, but not in that they make some evils which befall others inevitable, or some casual inconveniences unamendable. No wisdom but that which is infinite, and an eternal law in itself, foreseeing all things that possibly can be, hath just warrant to make decrees for men everlastingly immutable. Too strict obligement unto laws positive or decrees unalterable deprives both lawgivers and others of their native liberty and opportunity of doing good. Were the pope's wisdom and integrity parallel to that supereminent dignity which he challengeth, it were not amiss for the body whereof he is the lawful head, if he exercised the same power over his grants or acts that he doth over his breath; always reserving a
56 liberty to send them forth or call them in; to enlarge, contract, or invert them, according to exigencies or occasions present. To alter his opinion of men, as they do theirs in points of useful doctrine, or their demeanours in matters of life—curbing him this year whom he privileged the last year, now punishing where he lately rewarded, and, shortly after, rewarding where now he punisheth—would argue no mutability of mind or unsettled fickle disposition, but rather immovable constancy, if so in all these changes he truly observed the rule of justice, which, because it is always one and the same, and never varies, must needs afford different measures to different deserts, and fit contrary dispositions with contrary recompenses. But seeing princes and governors are made of the same corrupted mould with those whom they govern, ofttimes exposed by height of place to greater blasts of mutability and inconstancy than their infe-

riors, public laws have been sought out by most nations, to run like a straight line betwixt two distorted and crooked ones, and to be as a firm or bar between the tumultuous and raging passions of princes and subjects, which every foot (as we say) would fall foul were they not thus fended off one from the other. Upon this consideration many conquerors have been content to sheath up a great part of their illimited power (retaining some competent prerogatives to themselves and their successors) in public edicts or laws, not altogether so unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, yet less subject to change than lords' purposes or princes' pleasures: and every act whereto they pass their consent restrains them of some former liberty, and abates somewhat of their present greatness; to whose length or continuance (as Theopompus observed) much by this means is added; and it were better to live a hundred years, as he said, with ingenuous health and strength, than to swagger it for twenty with giantly force or athletical constitution. And albeit the law (which is a common looking-glass, to direct the prince in commanding and the subject in obeying) may sometimes lay out authority and sometimes obedience, or inflict punishment one while and dispense rewards another while, in measure greater or less than a wise and just arbitrator, chosen for these particular purposes, would allow of, yet hath it been thought fittest for all parts rather to brook these interposed mischiefs than to be perpetually subject to the former inconveniences of the papacy: if the popes (such as they are) or other princes should practise according to the canonist's rule, *Papa nunquam ligat sibi manus*, "The pope never ties his own hands."

3. But the unerrable rule of everlasting Justice, who from eternity decrees whatsoever may be, and foresees

whatsoever will be, (because heaven and earth may sooner pass than his word or acts,) passeth no act to the prejudice of his absolute and eternal power of jurisdiction. What grant or promise soever he make cannot bind the exercise of his everlasting liberty for a moment of time; they last no longer than *durante bene placito;* seeing gracious equity, and only it, is his everlasting pleasure. He ever was, ever is, and ever shall be, alike indifferent and free to recompense every man according to his present ways; and in that he always searcheth the very heart and secret thoughts, and never ceaseth to decree; his one and indivisibly everlasting decree, without any variety or shadow of change in itself, fits all the changes, several dispositions, and contingent actions of men and angels,
57 as exactly as if he did conceive and shape a new law for every one of them; and they are conceived and brought forth as well befitting them as the skin doth the body which nature hath enwrapped in it. No man living, I take it, will avouch any absolute necessity from all eternity that God should inevitably decree the deposition of Eli's line from the priesthood, or his two sons' destructions by the Philistines; for this were to bereave him of his absolute and eternal liberty. I demand, then, whether within the compass of time, or in eternity, as preexistent to Eli's days, he passed any act that could restrain his eternal liberty of honouring Eli's families as well as any others in their time? To say he did, were impiety, because it chargeth the Almighty with impotent immutability. What shall we say then? The deposition of his race, the sudden death and destruction of his sons, were not at all absolutely necessary, but necessary only upon supposed miscarriage of the possible means and opportunities which he had given them for honouring him:

and that eternal decree, *They that dishonour me, them will I dishonour*, as coexistent to the full measure of this their transgression, by it shapes their punishment.

4. To think of God's eternal decree with admiration void of danger, we must conceive it as the immediate axis or centre upon which every successive or contingent act revolves, and yet withal that wherein the whole frame of succession or contingency is fully comprehended, as an unconstant movable sphere in a far greater quiescent, or rather in such a one (as in the description of eternity was imagined) which hath drawn all the successive parts of motion into an indivisible unity of duration permanent. Every part of the larger sphere (this, swallowing up motion, in vigorous rest) should have coexistence local with all and every part of the next movable sphere under it, move it as slowly and swiftly as the latitude of successive motion can admit. Whilst we thus conceive of God's eternal decree and of his foreknowledge (included in our conceit of it), according to the analogy of what we must believe concerning the manner of his ubiquitary presence or immensity, we shall have no occasion to suspect that his necessary foreknowledge of what we do should lay a necessity upon our actions, or take away all possibility of doing otherwise ; rather we may by this supposal believe that as probable, and perceive in part the manner how it is so, which shall by God's assistance be demonstrated to be *de facto* most true. As, first, that the Omnipotent doth eternally decree an absolute contingency in most human acts ; secondly, that this eternal act or decree (which we thus conceive to be throughout the whole succession of time, in every place indivisibly coexistent to each human thought or action) doth not only perpe-

tually support our faculties, but withal uncessantly inspire them with contingency in their choice: that is, it so moves them as they may without let or incumbrance move themselves more ways than one; and yet, even whilst it so moves them, it withal inevitably effects the proportioned consequents which from everlasting were foreordained to the choices which we make, be they good or bad, or according to the several degrees of good or evil done by us, or of our affections or desires to do them.

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CHAP. XI.

Of transcendental Goodness, and of the Infinity of it in the Divine Nature.

1. If in assigning reasons of maxims or proverbial speeches we might not be thought to fetch light beyond the sun, we should say, Life unto things living is therefore sweet because it is a principal stem of being, as sweetness likewise is of goodness. However, we may resolve this physical axiom into a metaphysical: *Omne ens qua ens est bonum:* "Unto every thing its own proper being is good." Poison, though noisome to man, to the asp is pleasant; so is venom to the toad; and the adder delighteth in his sting. In things inanimate there should be no reluctance of contrary or hostile qualities, unless each had a kind of grateful right or interest in their own being, and were taught by nature to fight for it, as men do for their lives or goods. This is that goodness which we call entitative or transcendental; a goodness equally, alike truly communicated to all things that are, from his goodness who only is, but not participated equally, or according to equality, by all. For as the least vessel that is filled to the brim is as full as the greatest

that can be, and yet the quantity of liquor contained in them, equally full, is most unequal; so, albeit the entitative being of the fly, ant, or worm be unto them as good as man's being is to man, (for even the ant or fly being vexed, or worms trod upon, will bewray their spleen, and labour as it were to right themselves, for the loss or prejudice which they suffer in their entitative goodness, by doing harms to their tormentors,) yet is man's being simply much better than the being of ants or worms: and much worse were that man than any beast, that, with Gryllus in the poet, would like to change his human nature for a brutish. This excess of entitative goodness, by which one creature excelleth another, accrueth partly from the excellency of the specifical nature of entity which it accompanieth; as there is more entitative goodness in being a man than in being a lion, and more in being a lion than in being some inferior ignoble beast: it partly accrueth according to the greater or lesser measure wherein several creatures enjoy their specifical nature. Men, though by nature equal, are not equally happy, either in body or mind. Bodily life in itself is sweet, and is so apprehended by most; yet is loathsome to some, who, as we say, do not enjoy themselves, as none of us fully do. Sensitive appetites may be in some measure satisfied by course, not all at once. The complete fruition of goodness incident to one defeats another, though capable of greater pleasure, for the time, of what it most desires. *Venter non habet aures:* The belly pinched with hunger must be satisfied with meat, so must the thirsty throat be with drink, before the ears can suck in the pleasant sound of music, or the eye feed itself with fresh colours or proportions. Too much pampering bodily senses starves the mind; and deep contemplation feeds the mind, but pines the

body. *Of making many books* (saith Solomon [g]) *there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.* The more knowledge we get, the greater capacity we leave unsatisfied; so that we can never seize upon the entire possession of our own selves: and
59 contemplation (as the wise king speaketh) were vanity, did we use the pleasures of it any otherwise than as pledges or earnest of a better life to come. And albeit man in this life could possess himself as entirely as the angels do their angelical natures, yet could not his entitative goodness or felicity be so great as theirs is, because the proper patrimony which he possesseth is neither so ample nor so fruitful. God alone is infinite, in being infinitely perfect; and he alone infinitely enjoys his entire being, or perfection. The tenure of his infinite joy or happiness is infinitely firm, infinitely secured of being alway what it is; never wanting so much as a moment of time to enlarge or perfect it by continuance, uncapable of any enlargement or increase for the present. But this entitative or transcendental goodness is not that which we now seek, whereto notwithstanding it may lead us: for even amongst visible creatures, the better every one is in its kind, or according to its entitative perfection, the more good it doth to others: the truest measure of their internal or proper excellencies is their beneficial use or service in this great universe, whereof they are parts. What creature is there almost in this whole visible sphere, but specially in this inferior part, which is not beholden to the sun, from whose comfortable heat *nothing* (as the Psalmist [h] speaks) *can be hid?* It is, at least of lifeless or mere bodies, in itself the best and fairest, and far the best to others. And God, as

[g] Eccles. xii. 12. [h] Psalm xix. 6.

it seems, for this purpose sends forth this his most conspicuous and goodly messenger every morning, like a bridegroom bedecked with light and comeliness, to invite our eyes to look up unto the hills whence cometh our help; upon whose tops he hath pitched his glorious throne, at whose right hand is fulness of pleasures everlasting. And from the boundless ocean of his internal or transcendent joy and happiness sweet streams of perpetual joy and comfort more uncessantly issue than light from the sun, to refresh this vale of misery. That of men, the chief inhabitants of this great vale, many are not so happy as they might be, the chief causes are, that either they do not firmly believe the internal happiness of their Creator to be absolutely infinite, as his other attributes are; or else consider not in their hearts that the absolute infinity of this his internal happiness is an essential cause of goodness (in its kind infinite) unto all others, so far as they are capable of it; and capable all reasonable creatures by creation are; none but themselves can make them uncapable of happiness, at least in succession or duration infinite. Goodness is the nature of God; and it is the nature of goodness to communicate itself unto others, unto all that are not overgrown with evil, of which goodness itself can be no cause or author.

CHAP. XII. 60

Of the Infinity and Immutability of Divine Goodness communicative, or as it is the Pattern of Moral Goodness in the Creature.

1. THE father of epicures will have more than his sons to consent with him, that imbecility and indigence are the usual parents of pity, bounty, kindness, or

other like branches of communicative human goodness. Whilst we need not others' help, we little think in what need they stand of ours. The prince in his jollity can hardly compassionate the beggar's misery; nor knows the beggar how to bemoan decayed nobles, whose condition is more miserable than his own, though so it seems not unto him, who would think he had fully conquered want were he but furnished with such supplies of meat, drink, and clothing as these have always ready at hand. That sympathy which in lifeless or reasonless creatures naturally flows from similitude of internal qualities seldom breaks forth in men, but either from experimental remembrance of what lately hath, or from apprehension of what shortly may befall themselves: sight of the like afflictions in others as we have lately felt revives the phantasms or affections which were companions of our mourning; and by so pitying of our own former plight we pity them.

2. But albeit Epicurus' observation may seem in a manner universal whilst applied to its proper subject—man in his corrupt state—yet when he transcends, *a genere ad genus*, from our corruptible nature to the divine nature, which is immortal, his inference is of the same stamp with those fools' inductions that concluded in their hearts there was no God. The divine nature, saith he, is not penetrable by mercy or pity. Why so?—Will you hear a brute make enthymems?—Because these find no entrance into the hearts of men but through some breach of defect or indigence. It is well this slow-bellied evil beast could grant man's nature not to be altogether so bad or cruel, as want might not tame it, and make it gentle and kind. But would not brute beasts, so they might speak, disclaim his conclusion, that true felicity or fulness of all con-

tentment possible, should make the divine nature worse than want and misery doth the human? Surely there is somewhat else amiss in that which is made better by defect. Nor could wealth and honour make the mighty unmindful of others, but by making them first forget themselves. The externals whereon our desires fasten so captivate the human soul, that she cannot do as she would, or as nature teacheth her; but these strings being cut, she follows her native sway: and in a good sense it was most true which a master of a better sect than Epicurus founded hath taught, *Nemo sponte malus.*

3. Lust in old age, pride in beggars, and shifting in men overflowing with wealth, seem to transcend the nature of sins, and are monsters in corrupted nature; because, not begotten by temptations, they in a manner beget themselves: yet scarce shall we find an old man so prone to lust, a rich man so delighted in shuffling, an epicure so addicted to his pleasure, or any at all so ill affected either in himself or towards other, that, 61
being asked, would not profess his desire to deserve well of others, to be liberal, to be upright, compassionate, just, and bountiful. For though continuance in bad custom induce in a sort another nature, yet can it not transport any man so far beyond himself, or miscarry his thoughts so much, but he shall feel some secret impulsions unto goodness and some retractions from evil. But, as Seneca[1] well observes, "It is no

[1] Quod plerosque inemendabiles facit, omnium aliarum artium peccata artificibus pudori sunt, offenduntque de errantem, vitæ peccata delectant. Non gaudet navigio gubernator eversso, non gaudet ægro medicus elato, non gaudet orator, si patroni culpa reus cecidit: at contra, omnibus crimen suum voluptati est. Lætatur ille adulterio, in quod irritatus est ipsa difficultate: lætatur ille circumscriptione surtoque: nec ante illi culpa, quam culpæ fortuna displicuit. Id prava consuetudine evenit. Alioqui ut scias, subesse animis, etiam in pessima abductis,

marvel that we do not amend what we know to be amiss in ourselves; seeing errors in every other mystery or profession make the professor ashamed: only such as err in matter of life and manners are delighted with their errors. The mariner takes no delight to see his vessel overturned, nor the physician in sending his patient before his time unto his grave. The orator rejoiceth not when his client is through his error overthrown. Contrariwise, every criminous person is delighted with his crime. One solaceth himself in adultery, and taketh courage to prosecute his desires from the very difficulty of accomplishing them. Another delights in overreaching others, and in theft; never displeased with his faultiness until it prove unfortunate. All are apt to dissemble their faults, being content when they fall out fortunately to reap the fruit of them, whilst they subduct the faults of them: but a good conscience delighteth to set itself forth, and to have notice taken of it; whereas naughtiness is afraid of darkness itself." And as Epicurus elegantly saith, "A malefactor may have the hap, but not the assurance to be undiscovered." "But," as this author replies, "what avails it him not to have his naughtiness discovered, without hope or assurance that it shall not be discovered?" His conclusion is, "Naughtiness may be safe, but it can never be secure."

4. The reason why their naughtiness can never be warranted with security, is, because conscience in men

boni sensum, nec ignorari turpe, sed negligi; omnes peccata dissimulant, et quamvis feliciter cesserint, fructu illorum utuntur, ipsa subducunt. At bona conscientia prodire vult, et conspici: ipsas nequitia tenebras timet. Eleganter itaque ab Epicuro dictum puto: "Potest nocenti contingere ut lateat, latendi fides non potest." Aut si hoc modo melius hunc explicari posse judicas sensum: Ideo non prodest latere peccantibus, quia latendi etiamsi facultatem habent, fiduciam non habent. Ita est: tuta scelera esse possunt: secura non possunt.—Seneca, Epist. 97.

most vicious still bears evidence against them that they live not as she would have them. For, as Seneca in the same place well observes, "though bad custom may work a delight in naughtiness, yet even in minds drenched in the very dregs of filthiness there still remains a sense of goodness; nor is it so much our want of knowledge, as of our right estimate of what we know to be naught, which maketh naughtiness to be so little abhorred." The mind of man, in that it is indued with reason, hath the rules of equity imprinted in it, which it always seeks to instamp upon the inferior faculties of the soul. But this divine light of reason hath as small force to kindle the love of virtue in hearts overgrown with sensual desires, as the sun in a mist hath to set moist stuff on fire. The unsettled affections of youth sometimes admit the impression of these ideal characters in actual retired speculations; so will the water take the same shape from the seal which the wax doth, but hold it no longer than the seal is held upon it. The heart which maturity of years hath hardened with vast desires will as hardly be wrought into a new form; as the stone, which cannot take any other shape but only by losing some of its mass or substance; yet if those vast desires be cut off, or their hopes of supplies from externals intercepted, the soul, thus freed, becomes more fashionable 62
unto reason. Affability, which is as the superficial draught of reason endeavouring to stamp the heart with real and solid kindness, is as natural to the epicure as to another man, so long as the exercise of it is not prejudicial to his belly: and the less his desires were to satisfy it, the larger would the extension of his bowels of compassion be towards his brethren or poor neighbours: some drops of kindness may distil from him in the overflow of plenty, or store

sufficient to feed both eye and appetite; but in the days of scarcity he sucks in cruelty as wine, and feeds upon the needy as upon delicates. Were there no more sweet morsels in the market than would serve one man, not one of this crew but would cut them out of his father's throat rather than suffer his own wesand to be defeated of its intemperate expectations. Indigence, then, though Epicurus could not see so much, is, upon different occasions, the mother as well of cruelty and oppression as of bounty or pity.

2. From doing to all as we would be done unto by any, nothing doth hinder us so much (if aught besides do hinder us at all) as our conceited or opinative want of somewhat, which either for the present we do or hereafter may stand in need of, for satisfying the variety or unconstant longings of our unknown desires. How well soever they may speak or protest, experience schools us not to trust any that fix their expectations upon great matters, or have one eye always upon their private ends, but with this limitation—if the promises they now make shall not cross their opportunities when matters come to trial. But if we know a man of means more than competent for maintaining that estate wherein his constant resolution hath pitched content, one otherwise of temperate desires and composed affections, able to discern what is fitting betwixt man and man, we think him a fit rule for directing others, a pattern whereto would all conform themselves nothing should go amiss in church or commonweal. No man that conceives his own cause to be just and good but would commend it to his arbitrement before another's; for internal moderation, mixed with outward competency, is the only supporter of true constancy. Yet cannot this mixture in any created essence be so firm or permanent, but possibi-

lities or opportunities of satisfying some internal latent capacities, by external proffers, may dissolve it; for finite existence hath possibility of non-existence to control it; and possibility of non-existence includes possibility of being otherwise than it is: and therefore it is never impossible to finite being either to lose itself or change his properties. A more particular root of this contingency or unconstancy in reasonable creatures or intelligent, is the infinite capacity of their conceits or desires, within whose compass their finite motions may become eccentric and irregular, as it were a star fixed in too wide a sphere. The desires of collapsed angels were once tuned by their Creator in as perfect harmony as any creatures' could be; they had all competency that could be desired, whether of internal faculties or of objects to content them. Howbeit, whilst the chief ringleader of this rebellious rout sought to satisfy this infinity of his desire, not by participation of His joyful presence who was infinitely good, but by affecting that greatness and majesty infinite, which he was enabled to conceive, but whereof his nature was more uncapable than a wherry of an Argus' eyes' sail, his capacities did overcope. And his intemperate longings, while he was in travail of this prodigious birth, hath imprinted that ugly shape 63
upon him which now he bears. He is become the monstrous brood of his own monstrous and deformed desires; his mouth, opening too wide to swallow that which is incomprehensible, could never since be shut; his ravenous appetite cannot be satisfied. Like the grave, he feeds on rottenness; and by continual gnawing and devouring that which cannot satiate, he continually increaseth his unquenchable hunger. His will is wedded unto mischief, and affecteth nothing but that which is by nature evil, and, amongst evils,

that most greedily and uncessantly which is most contrary to infinite goodness. The first man, by this monster's impulsion, reaching too high for that which he could not compass, did put himself from off the appointed centre of his rest and revolutions, and since continueth irregular and unconstant in all his motions, thoughts, and actions. In him, in ourselves, in the whole nature, (besides that part which hath firm union with the infinite essence,) we find the maxim infallibly verified, *Mota facilius moventur*. By our first parent's needless yielding to one temptation, we are not able to resist any: our resolutions to follow that which we acknowledge to be good, or our adherence unto that infinite goodness from which he divorced his will, can never in this life be so firm and strong, but the allurements to contrary evils may be so great, or so cunningly proposed by the great tempter, that without especial grace we cannot resist their attractions. Since our internal harmony betwixt soul and body, and mutual correspondency of each faculty with other, was dissolved, no externals can consort with us. Just competency seems too little, all of us being as easily led by abundance as driven by want to do evil. And, which is worst of all, our earnest attempts to do that which is good and right draw iniquity after them; and whiles we take too hasty or unwieldy aim at our own welfare, others' harms fall under our level.

6. That which most improveth the force of temptations, whether suggested by want or indigence, or by other occasions or opportunities, is the inequality partly of our natural propensions, partly of means which minister their several contentments or annoyances. Wealth, in some men, gets the start of wit, and oversways them (otherwise not much misinclined) unto such vanities as usually are neither bred nor

nursed but by abundance. Others' wits overreach their revenues, and embolden them to stretch their projects or inventions beyond the rules of right and equity. Some men's bodies overgrow their souls, and these are easily impelled to act any boisterous mischief; others being impotent of body, strive so much the more to furnish their minds with subtile inventions or commodious experience, and by making too much use of the common proverb, "He that is weak had need to be wily," are easily tempted to practise unlawful policy with delight, as the only preservative against contempt, or as an instrument of revenge upon such as they hate or fear; and it would go much against the course of common experience, if that wiliness which hath weakness for its foundation should not be often enforced to cover or shelter itself with craft and fraud. To love our own wills is an impotency natural unto all; and we love them the better, at least more strongly, when we perceive them set on that which in itself is good. Whence it is that our desires of doing many things which are good and commendable, often draw us to use means not so commendable for their accomplishment. Many, out of an extraordinary good will 64
unto the poor, think it no robbery to cozen the rich, or to dispense with public laws for gratifying some private friend, whose welfare in conscience they are bound to tender. Unto these, and many like enormities, the infinite capacity of finite existence gave first possibility of being, and the inequality of our internal propensions, which can never fitly match or hold just proportion with external occurrences, gives life and improvement.

7. But in the incomprehensible sphere, which hath ubiquity for its centre and omnipotency for its axis, whose numberless lines are all possible perfections,

measureless, there is no place for exorbitancy. One branch of being cannot missway or overtop another, all being so great and firm, as none can be greater or firmer; being not united, but possessed in such perfect unity as prevents all possibility of distraction or division. Shall we say then, he possesseth all things that possibly he can desire to have? or rather, he always infinitely is, without all possibilities of not being whatsoever possibly can be? And though being infinite he can do all things, yet can he not desire to perfect himself, or to be greater or better than he is. In that he neither can fear the impairment nor wish the enlargement of his own estate, all outward employments of his power are for the good of his creatures; his will to have them when they were not, was but the influence or working of his essential goodness, which is so abundantly sufficient to his infinite being, that the overflowing of it is the fountain of all things besides which are good. Nothing besides him could possibly have been, unless he were in power and in being infinite; and unless his infinite being had been infinitely good, nothing besides him should actually have been, or been endowed with such being, as all things that actually are have from him. The proper being of every thing which actually is, or at least the continuance or amendment of such being, is infinitely desired by all, as being the stamp or impression of his infinite goodness, which is alike truly, though not equally or in the same measure communicated to all things that are. The entity of every thing is good to itself, and most desired.

8. And though these first assurances of his goodness and lovingkindness be usually requited on man's part with unkindness and despite, yet the greatness of his majesty never sways him to sudden revenge: quite

contrary to the corrupt nature of man, (whose goodness usually is ill-thriven by his overgrowing greatness,) the unresistible strength of his almighty power is the unmovable pillar of moderation and merciful forbearance. The greatest potency of man being but finite, the higher it grows, the apter it is to be overtopped with jealous impotency: the greatest monarch that is may be prevented by others (of whose power he is jealous) in the exercise of his power or authority over him, unless he carefully watch his time and fit seasons, or take opportunity when it is offered, for accomplishing his projects: but of God saith the wise man, Wisd. xii. 18, *Thou, mastering thy power, judgest with equity, and orderest, or governest us with great favour: for thou mayest use power when thou wilt. And his will is to use it, when men will not believe that he is of full power to do what he will;* as the same wise man expresseth, ver. 17. But more full unto our present purpose are the sayings of the same wise man, ver. 15, 16: *Forsomuch then as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all things* 65 *righteously: thinking it not agreeable with thy power to condemn him that hath not deserved to be punished. For thy power is the beginning of righteousness, and because thou art the Lord of all, it maketh thee to be gracious to all.* Though this author be not, yet this passage in him is canonical, and fully consonant to God's own words to Jonah, chap. iv. 10, 11: *Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it to grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?* Amongst great

men, many oppress their tenants; but what lord would spoil his proper inheritance, whereto no other can be entitled, or eat out the heart of that ground which he cannot alienate or demise? what architect would deface his own work, unless the image of his unskilfulness (whereof the Creator cannot be impeached) be so apparent in it, as he cannot but blush to behold it? or who would leave a goodly foundation bare or naked, unless he be unable to rear it up without injustice? Now seeing the entitative good of proper being is the foundation of that true happiness which flows from more special participation of God's presence, wheresoever he hath laid the one, it is to all that rightly consider his wisdom, truth, and goodness, an assured pledge of his will and pleasure to finish it with the other: as his nature is immutable, so are his gifts without repentance: the current of his joyful beneficence can admit no intermission, much less admixture of any evil: sorrow, woe, and misery must seek some other original; they have no hidden vent or secret issue from the Ocean of joy and happiness.

9. As the fountain of bodily light cannot send forth darkness, but uniformly diffuseth light, and light only throughout this visible sphere; so cannot the infinite Ocean of true felicity send forth any influence but such as is apt to cherish the seeds of joy and happiness, wherewith every creature capable of them was sown in its first creation. And as it is the property of light propagated or diffused from the sun to make such bodies as are capable of its penetration (as glasses, crystal, pearl, &c.) secondary fountains of light to others, so doth the influence of divine goodness inspire all that are conformable to his will with desire of doing to others as he hath done to them, that is, of being secondary authors or instruments of good to all;

but such as wilfully strive against the stream of his overflowing goodness, or boisterously counterblast the sweet and placid spirations of celestial influence, become creators of their own woe, and raise unto themselves those storms wherein they perish. Yet so essential it is unto this infinite Fountain of goodness, however provoked, to send forth only streams of life, and such is the virtue of the streams which issue from him, that as well the evil and miseries which miscreants procure unto themselves, as their mischievous intentions towards others, infallibly occasion increase of joy and happiness unto all that give free passage unto their current. And this current of life, which issueth from this infinite Ocean, never dries up, is never wasted by diffusion; the more it is dammed or quarved by opposition of the sons of darkness, the more plentifully it overflows the sons of light: all the good which one refuseth or putteth from them returns in full measure to the other.

But if the miseries which wicked spirits or their 66
consorts either suffer themselves or intend to others work good to those that receive the influence of infinite goodness, might he not without prejudice or imputation inspire these castaways with such mischievous thoughts, or at least intend their woe and misery, as these are occasions or means of others' happiness or of his glory? We are indeed forbid to do evil that good may ensue; but if it be his will to have reprobates do or suffer evil for the good of his chosen, shall not both be good, as willed by him whose will (in that he hath absolute dominion over all his creatures) is the rule of goodness?

CHAP. XIII.

In what Sense, or how God's infinite Will is said to be the Rule of Goodness.

1. BAD was the doctrine, and worse the application or use, which Anaxarchus would have gathered from some hieroglyphical devices of antiquity, wherein Justice was painted as Jupiter's assistant in his regiment. "Hereby," saith this sophister unto Alexander[k], (then bitterly lamenting the death of his dearest friend Clytus, whom he had newly slain in his temulent rage,) "your majesty is given to understand that the decrees of great monarchs, who are a kind of gods on earth, must be reputed oracles of justice, and their practices may not be reputed unjust either by themselves or by others." But this sophistical inversion of these ancients' meaning was too palpable to please either the wiser or honester sort of heathen, though living in those corrupt times: for albeit many of them conceived of Jupiter as of a great king subject to rage and passion, yet all of them held Justice for an upright, mild, and virtuous lady, ready always to mitigate, never to ratify his rigorous decrees, always tempering his wrath with equity. The true Jehovah, as he needs no sweet-tongued consort to moderate his anger, as Abigail did David's, so hath he no use of such sophisters as Anax-

[k] Sunt qui scribant, Anaxarchum sophistam consolandi ejus causa accersitum, ad eum venisse, quumque cubantem atque suspirantem offendisset, arridentem dixisse, Ignorare ipsum cur veteres sapientes Justitiam Jovi assidentem fecerint: nimirum quia quicquid a Jove decernitur, id juste factum esse censeri debet. Oportere igitur, quæ a magno rege fierent, justa existimari; primum quidem ab ipso rege, deinde a cæteris mortalibus. Atque hoc quidem dicto nonnihil solatii Alexandro attulisse. Ego vero majoris errati quam prioris autorem Alexandro Anaxarchum fuisse censeo, si illam viri sapientis sententiam esse statuit.—Arrian. de Expedit. Alex. lib. 4.

archus, to justify the equity of his decrees by his omnipotent sovereignty or absolute dominion over all his creatures.

2. To derogate aught from his power who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell fire, I know is dangerous; and to compare the prerogatives of most absolute earthly princes with his, would be more odious: yet this comparison I may safely make:[1] he doth not more infinitely exceed the most impotent wretch on earth in power and greatness, than he doth the greatest monarch the world hath, or ever had, in mercy, justice, and lovingkindness; nor is his will the rule of goodness because the designs thereof are backed by infinite power, but because holiness doth so rule his power, and moderate his will, that the one cannot enjoin or the other exact any thing not most consonant to the eternal or abstract patterns of equity. His will revealed doth sufficiently warrant all our actions, because we know that he wills nothing but what is just and 67
good; but this no way hindereth, but rather supposeth justice and goodness to be more essential objects of his will than they are of ours. And therefore when it is said, "Things are good because God wills them," this illative infers only the cause of our knowledge, not of the goodness which we know; and the logical resolution of this vulgar dialect would be this, "We know this or that to be good, because God's will revealed commends it for such:" but his will revealed commends it for such because it was in its nature good; for unless such it had been, he had not willed it. These principles, though unquestionable to such as fetch their divinity from the fountain, will perhaps, in the judg-

[1] Quanto superior est Deus homine, tam mea malitia est inferior bonitate ejus, ut qualitate ita etiam quantitate.—Anselm. in Meditat. cap. 8.

ment of others that never taste it but in trenches, be liable to these exceptions:

3. If the goodness of every thing presuppose its being, and nothing can be without God's will, what can be good (we speak in order of nature, not of time) before God wills it? Of being or goodness actually existent in any creature, it is most true, neither can be without some precedent act of God's will; but as there is a logical possibility presupposed to the working of the almighty power, so is there a goodness objective precedent in order of nature to the act or exercise of his will; and unto some things considered as logically possible this goodness objective is so essentially annexed, that if it be his will to give them actual being, they must of necessity be actually good; nor can he that can do all things will their contraries. He might, had it pleased him, have taken life and existence from all mankind, when he preserved Noah and his family; but to reserve them men, and no reasonable creatures, was no object of power omnipotent; much less doth his omnipotency enable him to work aught contradictory to his own nature or essential goodness. As is the man, so is his strength; and as is the nature of the willer, such are the objects of his will: *Simile gaudet simili.* To long after such meats as feed diseaseful humours is natural to every disease; and our nature being corrupted whets our appetites to such things as are agreeable to the predominate corruption wherewith it is tainted, not to the purity wherein it was created. To will only that which is consonant to his nature is so much more essential to God than unto us, by how much his nature is more simple than ours is; and seeing it is essential purity, altogether uncapable of corruption, his will cannot pitch but on that which is pure and holy:

whence the prime rule of all goodness, without himself, is consonancy to his essential purity and justice: *Forasmuch as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all things righteously: thinking it not agreeable to thy power to condemn him that hath not deserved to be punished.* Wisdom xii. 15. He loveth truth and sincere dealing, because he himself is true and just. That veracity which is coeternal to his essence includes an everlasting enmity unto treachery, fraud, and perjury; his immortal, spotless, and unchangeable purity cannot approve of lust and intemperancy, or condemn chastity in any person, at any time; nor could he have given a law, as some lawless lawgivers have done, for the authorizing of promiscuous or preposterous lust. To legitimate violence, or entitle oppression unto the inheritance bequeathed to conscionable and upright dealing, is without the prerogative of omnipotency; it cannot be ratified by any parliament of the Trinity blessed for ever: the practice or countenance of these and the like are evil, not in us only, to whom they are forbidden, but so evil in 68
themselves, that the Almighty could not but forbid and condemn them, as professed enemies to his most sacred Majesty.

4. To square great men's actions to the dictates of reason or nature given in their good days, or to bring their wills within compass of any constant law, seems greater violence than if we should seek to fashion their bodies by handsome well-proportioned garments, but much too strait. And yet we see by daily experience, that such as are most impatient of regulation or restraint are most importunate to have their own unruly wills the rules of their inferiors' minds and consciences. To do otherwise than they would have

them, though they allege the dictates both of reason and God's word, will admit no appeal from the censure of peevishness or perverseness; but for them to set constant patterns of that morality or good behaviour, whose defects in inferiors they either punish or make advantage of, is reputed a kind of pedantism or mechanical servitude; to request such performances seems as harsh as if we should entreat them to set us copies or songs, or take pains in teaching us some honest trade. And seeing inferiors are secretly blinded with this pride of heart, which breaks forth more violently in superiors, most of both ranks measure God's will by their own. But if we will condemn this impatience of restraint as a fault in ourselves, we must of necessity acquit the Almighty from the like. The infinite greatness of his majesty cannot wrest his most holy will from strict observance of such rules of righteousness as he sets us to follow. That integrity wherewith our first nature was clothed was but the image of his holiness; and he that requires us *to be holy as he is holy*, or *perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect*, exacts not of us that we should be as holy and perfect as he is, in any point of his imitable perfections: every part of that holiness which becometh saints is in the best of them but as the material form in an house built of untowardly stuff by unskilful hands; but in him, according to the exactest mathematical or ideal form that the cunningest architect hath in his head. The best examples of goodness we can conceive are but as dead pictures of those ever-living ones which he expresseth in his works. All his decrees concerning man are not in themselves only, but to man's eyes that look not on them asquint, so straight and just, that he will refer the trial unto

the deliberate and sober thoughts of his enemies: *Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?* Ezek. xviii. 25.

5. This may instruct us, that those patterns of holiness or perfections which we are bound to imitate in Him are not to be taken from his bare commandment or revelation of his will, but from the objects of his will revealed, or from the eternal practices which he hath exhibited, as so many express or manifest proofs that his will is always holy and just; albeit we cannot always so expressly discern the manner how it is just and holy in some particular commandments, but must implicitly believe it to be such in them, because it is so eminently and apparently holy and just in those perfections whereof our general duties are the imperfect representations. Of all his moral commandments, not one there is whose sincere practice doth not in part make us truly like him; and we are bound to be conformable to his will revealed, that we may be conformable to his nature; without conformity whereunto we cannot participate of his happiness; for happiness is the immediate consequent of his nature. The antecedent of Lactantius' argument; *Qui nos* 69
irasci jubet, is utique irascitur, i. e. "He that biddeth us be angry is certainly angry himself," is not so certain or authentic, and the inference is somewhat doubtful. But, out of all question, he that bids us unfeignedly bless our persecutors doth unfeignedly tender his blessings to such as persecute him in his members; he that seriously exhorts us to be merciful and kind to all, sheweth kindness to the most unkind. That charity which he hath enjoined every man towards all, (his greatest enemies not excepted,) though we consider it in the most charitably minded martyrs, in whose death it seemed to shine, were but as weak

sparkles or vanishing smoke of those infinite and eternal flames of love which burst out in him toward such as have deserved worse at his hands than any tyrant of his tormented servants. That truth and fidelity which he exacts of us, the faithfulness of Abraham himself, is but a little map or narrow surface of that infinite solidity of truth whereon his promises are founded. Between the chastity and temperance of purest virgins and his eternal purity, there is the like true correspondency, but not so great, as there is betwixt the dross and corpulency and the refined or sublimated spirits of the same bodies. Or could that rule which is the fulfilling of the whole law and the prophets, *Do unto every man as we would be done unto*, be exactly fulfilled by us, it would be but a slender though a true model or representation of his eternal equity—*He that honoureth me, him will I honour:* for in this and the like he expects no more than the inward affection of mortal hearts, or praises of man, whose breath is in his nostrils; being ready, out of his goodness, to recompense these silly services with glory, love, and happiness everlasting. But doth he intend thus well to all, or destruction unto some, as it is a means of bliss to those whom he loves? If so he did, we might be exempt from that negative precept of not doing evil that good might ensue; for the only reason why we are bound not to do so is, because, in so doing, we should become unlike our heavenly Father, and not be *perfect as he is perfect*. But as he turns the voluntary evils of some to the good of others, so may we, and ought to consecrate such forfeitures as legally fall into our hands to pious uses, or better the states of such as tender public welfare by others' deserved harms.

6. Be it then granted (which is the root of all

objections against these resolutions) that God's glory must as well appear in the punishment of the reprobate as in the beatifying of the elect, the consequence will be quite contrary to that which their objections would hence infer; for if the foundation of God's glory be as sure in the one case as in the other, the manner of his dealing with both must be alike perfect, and alike behoveful for us to follow: *Sine bonitate* (saith Seneca) *nulla majestas*, "Goodness is the foundation of glory." Now, were it true that he did intend evil to some before they had committed any, (though not as evil to them, but as a means of others' good,) or absolutely ordained them to eternal inevitable misery for the advancement of his own glory, we should not sin, but rather imitate the perfection of our heavenly Father in robbing Judas to pay Peter, or in feeding the hungry, such especially as be of the household of faith, with the spoils of ungodly rich men or unbelievers. More warrantable it were to guess at the perfection of his justice towards the wicked, and of his bounty towards the godly, by the 70
commendable shadow or imitation of it in earthly gods. To procure the common good without intention of harm to any, and with admission of as few private mischiefs as may be, is the chief praise of great statesmen; and it is the glory of princes to encourage all men unto virtuous courses by good example, gracious exhortations, and unpartial distribution of public honours or commodities; and yet withal to inflict disgrace upon haughty contemners of those gracious allurements, and to be stern in execution of justice, without favour, upon notorious transgressors of wholesome laws; yet not to use severity without sorrow, nor draw blood but by way of medicine, for preserving of their crowns and dig-

nities, for maintenance of public peace, or for preventing the like diseases in other particular members of the same body. Magistrates that would mind these matters more than raising themselves, their friends, or posterity, more than life itself, which they owe unto their country, should exhibit us a true model, though (God wot) but a slender one, of our heavenly Father's wisdom and lovingkindness; first, in drawing men to repentance, by gracious promises and unfeigned proposals of inestimable rewards for their service; secondly, in making the wicked and obstinate despisers of his infinite goodness serve to the manifestation of his endless glory, and confirmation of those that love him in the immortal state of happiness. These prints of his fatherly care and justice are yet fresh to be seen in his proceedings with ungracious Cain: *And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him*, Gen. iv. 6, 7. Severe punishment for doing evil, without precedent loving instructions or good encouragement to do well, is the natural offspring of unnaturalness: it bears no shadow of that justice or equity whose glorious pattern shines most brightly in our heavenly Father.

CHAP. XIV.

Of God's infinite Love to Mankind.

1. If the apostle's authority could not persuade us to believe, his reasons would enforce us to grant, that the issues of blessing and cursing from one and the same mouth are contrary to the course of nature, and

argue the nature of man (in whom alone this discord is found) to be much out of tune. *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing: my brethren, these things ought not so to be,* James iii. 10: for nature in other things gives you a better example; *Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries? either a vine figs?* &c. These and the like fountains of natural truth are as open to us as they were to him; and we should much wrong both this ambassador of Christ and God's image in ourselves, if we did believe them only for his authority, and not for their own native perspicuity. The best use of apostolic authority, in these allegations, is to warrant our use of the like, though in matter divine: not one of his instances but holds as truly in God as in man; not one but receiveth a necessary increase of strength from the indivisible 71
unity of the divine essence. For a fig-tree to bear olive-berries is less impossible than for the tree of life to bring forth death: to cause the vine bring forth figs were not so hard a point of husbandry as to derive cursedness or misery from the fountain of bliss: for a spring to send forth water sweet and bitter, fresh and salt, at one and the same place, is more compatible with any reasonable conceit, than for hate or harmful intentions to have any issue from pure love: but *God is love;* yea, love is his essence as Creator. In that he is the author of being, he is the author of goodness to all things that are; (being, unto every thing in its own proper being, is good;) and goodness in an intelligent donor is always the fruit of love. Hence saith the wise man of him that is wisest of all, of him that can neither deceive nor be deceived, *He hateth nothing that he hath made:* for

even their being, and that goodness which accompanies it, is an undoubted pledge of his love. If to bless God the Maker, and to curse men which are made after his similitude, argue (in the apostle's supposal) a dissolution of that internal harmony which should be in the human nature, to hate some and love others of his best creatures, all being made after his own image, would necessarily infer a greater distraction in the indivisible essence, besides the contradiction which it implies to infinite goodness. To love the works of his own hands is more essential to him that made all things out of mere love, than it is unto the fire to burn matter combustible; and if his love be, as he is, truly infinite, it must extend to all, seeing all are less than infinite.

2. Love, were it perfect in us, would perfectly fulfil God's law, and make up a complete body or system of moral goodness. Now the most absolute perfection of that love whereof the human nature (though uncorrupted) could be capable, would be but an imperfect shadow of our heavenly Father's most perfect love, which hath the same proportion to his goodness that love in us (were it as perfect as it possibly might be) should have to our moral goodness: that is, it is his complete communicative goodness: and though these two in him be rather different names than diverse attributes, yet we love his goodness better whiles it is attired with the name of love: for of men that do us equal good turns, we love them best whom we conceive to love us most; and lovingkindness seems good and lovely even in the eyes of such as reap no profit from it besides the sight of it: the very exercise of it in others excites our weak inclinations to the like; and our inclinations moved, stir up a speculative assent or secret verdict of conscience, to approve that truth

which we cannot follow in the practice: *Beatius est dare, quam accipere:* "It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive." No man measureth that which we call a good nature (as of men some are better natured than others) either by the means it hath to benefit, or by the benefits bestowed, but by the fervency of unfeigned good will, and hearty desires of doing good to all. This is that wherein (especially when it is holpen by grace) we most resemble the divine nature, which is infinitely better than the human nature, (though taken at the best,) not only in respect of his ability to do good, but of his good will to do the best that may be. And this his good will exceeds ours, not intensively only, but extensively. For we are bound to imitate him, as well in the extension of our unfeigned good will towards all, as in the fervency of 72
our desires to do the best good we can to some, because his lovingkindness to man is both ways infinitely perfect: *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man glory in his strength, neither the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord,* Jer. ix. 23, 24. The first then, and most native issue of infinite goodness, is the exercise of bounty or lovingkindness, which floweth from it, without matter or motive to incite it. This is that which gave being, and with being, some portion of goodness, unto all things that are; it alters the name, but not the nature in the current. To prevent others with good turns before they can expect or deserve them is the highest point of bounty whereto the ability of man can reach; but God gave us that we most desire, proper being, with the

appurtenances, before we could desire it; for it is the foundation of all desire. From bounty or lovingkindness, or from that goodness whence they spring, mercy and compassion differ only in the extrinsical denomination taken from different objects. Compassion is good will towards others, provoked from notice of their misery; and mercy is but an excess of bounty, not estranged from ill deservers in distress, so long as the exercise of it breeds no harm to such as are more capable of bountiful love and favour. This incompossibility between the exercise of mercy and bounty towards particulars ill deserving, and the preservation of common good, occasioneth the interposition of justice punitive, whose exercise is in a sort unnatural to the Father of mercy, for *he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men*, Lament. iii. 33. Nothing in good men can provoke it towards offenders, but the good of others deserving either better or not so ill, which might grow worse by evil doers' impunity. To take pleasure in the pain or torture of notorious malefactors, is a note of inhumanity; their just punishment is only so far justly pleasant, as it procures either our own or others' welfare, or avoidance of those grievances which they more justly suffer than we or others of the same society should do. The more kind and loving men by nature are, the more unwilling they are to punish, unless it be for these respects. How greatly then doth it go against his nature, who is lovingkindness itself, to punish the works of his own hands; man especially, who is more dear unto him than any child can be unto his father, for he is the Father of all mankind! for *it is he that made us, and not we ourselves;* not those whom we call fathers of our flesh, for even they likewise were made by him. Hence he saith, *Call no man father upon the earth,*

for one is your Father, which is in heaven, Matt. xxiii. 9. Is the title his peculiar more than the reality answering to it? Is he more willing to be called the only Father of all the sons of men, than to do the kind office of a father to them? No; *like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth we are dust*, Ps. ciii. 13, 14. It seems this psalmist either was or had a most kind and loving father, and hence illustrates the kindness of his heavenly Father by the best model of kindness which he knew. But if God truly be a father of all mankind, he certainly exceeds all other fathers as far in fatherly kindness as he doth men in any branch of goodness or perfection. This is the first foundation of our faith laid by his only Son: [m]*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or, what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?* Matt. vii. 7—10. Every father that heard him would have been ready to have answered no; yet none so ready or careful as they should be, to give or provide best things for their children, because all besides him are evil fathers: *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?* ver. 11. He is then so much more willing to give good

[m] Ad multiplicandam quippe sanctorum sapientiam proficit, quod postulata tarde percipiunt, ut ex dilatione crescat desiderium, ex desiderio intellectus augeatur. Intellectus vero cum intenditur, ejus in Deum ardentior affectus aperitur. Affectus autem ad pro merenda cœlestia tanto fit capax quanto fuerit expectando longanimis.—Greg. lib. 20. §. 61. Moral. in Job. c. 30.

things to his children, as he is better or greater than other parents. His love to all men, seeing all are his sons, by a more peculiar reference than Abraham was Adam's, or Isaac Abraham's, is infinitely greater than any parents bear to the fruits of their bodies. Mortal fathers love children when they have them; but love to themselves, or want of means to immortalize their own persons, makes them desire to have children. The only wise immortal God, (who is all-sufficient to all, most to himself, unacquainted with want of whatsoever can be desired,) out of the abundance of his free bounty and mere lovingkindness, did first desire our being; and having given it us, doth much more love us, after we are enstamped with his image: for he sows not wheat to reap tares, nor did he inspire man with the breath of life that he might bring forth death.

3. The heathens conceived this title of *father* as too narrow for fully comprehending all references of lovingkindness betwixt their great Jupiter and other demigods or men:

Jupiter omnipotens regum rex ipse, Deusque
Progenitor, genitrixque Deum, Deus unus, et omnis:

and another poet[n],

Jupiter et mas est et nescia fœmina mortis.

And because the affection of mothers, especially to their young and tender ones, is most tender, the true Almighty hath deigned to exemplify his tender mercy and compassion towards Israel as David did Jonathan's love towards him, far surpassing the love of women, yea of mothers to their children: *Sion had said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me;* but her Lord replies, *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on*

[n] Orpheus. Vide Apul. in lib. de Mundo: et Forcatuli, lib. 5. p. (703.) 323.

the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, Isa. xlix. 15. And if his love could sufficiently be expressed by these dearest references amongst men, whose natural affection towards their tender brood (in respect of meaner creatures) is much abated by wrong use of reason, (as many mothers, by greatness of place or curiosity of education, are less compassionate towards their children, than other, silly women are,) he hath chosen the most affectionate female amongst reasonless creatures to blazon his tender care and loving protection over ill-deserving children: *How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!* Matt. xxiii. 37. Finally, as he gives much more to our being than our earthly parents, whom we suppose to give us being; so all the sweet fruits or comforts of love, whether of fathers and mothers towards their 74
children, of husbands towards their wives, or of brethren to brethren, sisters to sisters, or one friend to another, (their sinfulness only excepted,) are but distillations or infusions of his infinite love to our nature. To witness this truth unto us, the Son of God was made both father and brother and husband to our nature, &c. Every reference or kind office whereof reasonable creatures are mutually capable, every other creature, (though void of reason, so not void of love and natural affection,) may express some part of our heavenly Father's lovingkindness; but the love of all, though infinitely increased in every particular, and afterwards made up in one, could no way equalize his love towards every particular soul created by him. Fear of death, or other danger, hath such joint interest with love, (as well in the heart of man as in other creatures,) that albeit they would do more for their young ones than they do, if they could, yet they do not

usually so much as they might; not so much for their model of wit or strength, as God for his part, though infinite in wisdom and power, doth for the sons of men. He that feareth none, but is feared of all, he that needs no counsellor, but hath the heart of prince and counsellor in his hand, makes protestation in his serious grief, that he hath done all for his unfruitful vineyard that he could, as much as possibly could be done for it. Or, if his serious protestations cannot deserve credit with deceitful man, his solemn oath is witness of greater love than hath been mentioned, of greater than the heart of man is able to conceive, even towards such as all their lifetime have hated him: *As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of him that dies.*

If, besides the authority of these and infinite more sacred texts most perspicuous in themselves, the interpretation of the church be required for establishing of the doctrine delivered, the whole ancient church, some pieces of St. Austin only exempted, which may be counterpoised with other parts of the same father's writings, is ready to give joint verdict for us. And whether the restrictions which some reformed churches have endeavoured to lay upon God's promises be compatible with the doctrine of the English church, comes in the next place to be examined.

CHAP. XV.

What the Church of England doth teach concerning the Extent of God's Love: of the Distinction of singula generum, *and* genera singulorum: *of the Distinction of* voluntas signi *and* voluntas beneplaciti.

1. WHAT middle course soever the Church of England doth hold or may take for compromising contentions between some other reformed churches in points of election and reprobation, of free-will, or man's

ability, before the state of regeneration; she doth not in her public and authorized doctrine come short of any church this day extant in the extent of God's unspeakable love to mankind. No national council, though assembled for that purpose, could fit their doc- 75
trine more expressly to meet with all the late restrictions of God's love, than the church our mother, even from the beginning of reformation, hath done; as if she had then foreseen a necessity of declaring her judgment in this point, for preventing schisms or distraction in opinions amongst her sons. First, she enjoins us to beseech God to *have mercy upon all men.* This was the practice of the ancient church, which in her opinion needed no reformation; a practice enjoined by St. Paul [o]; *I exhort or desire first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks be made for all men.* If any man shall seek to lay that restraint upon this place which St. Austin somewhere doth, as if the word *all men* did import only *genera singulorum, all sorts of men,* not *singula generum, every particular man;* the scanning of the words following, the sifting of the matter contained in both, with the reason of the exhortation, and other real circumstances, will shake off this or other like restriction with greater ease than it can be laid upon it. We are commanded to pray for no more than them whose salvation we are unfeignedly to desire, otherwise our prayers were hypocritical. Are we then to desire the salvation of some men only, as they are dispersed here and there, throughout all nations, sorts, or conditions of men, or for every man of what condition soever, of what sort or nation soever he be? The apostle exhorts us to pray for kings, (not excepting the most malignant enemies which the Christians

[o] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

then had,) and *for all that be in authority.* And if we must pray for all that are in authority, with fervency of desire, that they may come unto the knowledge of the truth, then questionless we are to desire, we are to pray for the salvation of all and every one which are under authority. *God is no accepter of persons;* nor will the Omnipotent permit us so to respect the persons of the mighty in our prayers, as that we should pray that all and every one of them might become peers of the heavenly Jerusalem, and but some choice or selected ones of the meaner sort might be admitted into the same society. We must pray then for high and low, rich and poor, without excepting any, either in particular or indefinitely. The reason why our prayers for all men must be universal, is, because we are bound to desire the spiritual good of all men, not as they fall under our indefinite, but under our universal consideration. The reason again why we are bound to desire the spiritual good of all men universally considered, is, because we must be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. Unto this universal desire we must add our best endeavours that saving truth may be imparted unto all, because it is our heavenly Father's will, his unfeigned will, that all *should come to the knowledge of truth.*

2. Both parts of this inference (as, first, that it is our duty to pray for all sorts of men, and for every man of what sort soever; and secondly, that we are therefore to pray thus universally, because it is God's will, not only that we should thus pray, but that all without exception should come unto the truth and be saved) are expressly included in the prayers appointed by the Church of England to be used upon the most solemn day of devotions. The collects or prayers are in number three. The first, "Almighty God, we

beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for the which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross," &c. The tenor of this petition, if we respect only the form, is inde- 76
finite, not universal; but every logician knows, and every divine should consider, that the necessity of the matter, whether in prayers or propositions, will stretch the indefinite form wherewith it is enstamped as far as an absolute universal. That the form of this petition is in the intention of the Church of England to be as far extended as we have said, that is, 'to all and every one of the congregation present,' the prayer following puts out of question; for in that we are taught to pray for the whole church, and for every member of it: "Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the church is governed and sanctified; receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy holy congregation, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee," &c. If here it be excepted, that albeit this prayer be conceived in terms formally universal, yet is the universal form of it to be no further extended than its proper matter or subject; and that, as will be alleged, is the mystical live-body of Christ, whose extent, or the number of whose members, is to us unknown; the third and last prayer will clearly quit this exception, and free both the former petitions from these or the like restrictions: for in the last prayer we are taught to pray for all and every one which are out of the church, that they may be brought into the church, and be made partakers with us of God's mercy and the common salvation: "Merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou

hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord." If God, therefore, will not the death of any Jew, Turk, or infidel, because of nothing he made them men, we may safely conclude that he willeth not the death of any, but the life of all, whom of men or infidels he hath made Christians, to whom he hath vouchsafed the ordinary means of salvation, and daily invites by his messengers to embrace them. He which made all things without invitation, out of mere love, made nothing hateful; nor is it possible that the unerring Fountain of truth and love should cast his dislike, much less fix his hatred, upon any thing that was not first in its nature odious. Nothing can make the creature hateful or odious to the Creator besides its hatred or enmity of that love by which it was created, and by which he sought the restauration of it when it was lost. Nor is it every degree of man's hatred or enmity unto God, but a full measure of it, which utterly exempts man from his love, as that reverend bishop[p] and glorious martyr, one of the first reformers of the religion professed in this land, observes.

3. If with these authorized devotions we compare the doctrine of our church in the public Catechism, what can be more clear, than that as God the Father

[p] Hooper, in his Preface to the Ten Commandments.—See parag. 8. of this chapter.

doth love all mankind without exception, so the Son of God did redeem, not some only of all sorts, but all mankind universally taken. First, we are taught "to believe in God the Father, who made us and all the world." Now, if the church our mother have in the former prayers truly taught us that God hateth nothing which he hath made, this will bring forth another truth, viz. that either there be some men which are not of God's making, or else that he hateth no 77
man (not Esau) as he is a man, but as a sinner, but as an enemy or contemner of his goodness. And consequently to this branch or corollary of this former truth, we are in the same Catechism, in the very next place, taught "to believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed us and all mankind." And if all mankind were redeemed by him, then all of this kind were unfeignedly loved, none were hated by him. And though in the same place we are taught to believe in the Holy Ghost, as in the Sanctifier of all that are sanctified, yet this we are taught with this caveat, that he doth sanctify "all the elect people of God," not all mankind. All, then, are not sanctified by God the Holy Ghost which are redeemed by God the Son, nor doth God the Father bestow all his spiritual blessings upon all whom he doth unfeignedly love, or on whom he hath bestowed the blessing of baptism as the seal or pledge of their redemption. All these inferences are so clear, that the consideration of them makes us doubt whether such amongst us as teach the contrary to any of these have at any time subscribed unto the Book of Common Prayers, or whether they had read it before they did subscribe unto it or contradict it. That this universal extent of God's love, and of the redemption wrought by Christ, is a fundamental principle, whereon many serious and fruitful exhortations

in the Book of Homilies are immediately grounded, shall, by God's assistance, appear in the article concerning Christ. For a concludent proof that God doth unfeignedly will, not *genera singulorum*, all sorts of men only, but *singula generum*, every one of all sorts to be saved, take it briefly thus: All they which are saved, and all they which are not saved, make up both parts of the former distinction or division to the full: but God will have all to be saved which are saved; he likewise willeth the salvation of all such as are not saved, that is, of such as die: therefore he willeth the salvation of every one of all sorts. That God doth will the salvation of all that are saved, no man ever questioned; that God did will, not the life, but death, of such as died, the Jews (God's own people) did sometimes more than question; and to prevent the like querulous murmurings of misbelief in others he once for all interposed his solemn oath: *As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should repent and live.* None, then, can be saved whom God would not have saved; many are not saved whom God would have saved.

4. But how or by what will doth he will that they should be saved that are not saved? Doth he will their salvation by his revealed, not by his secret will? Doth he give signification only of his good-will towards them, whereas his good-will and pleasure is not finally to do them any real good? This I take to be the meaning of *voluntas signi* and *beneplaciti*. But, it being granted that God doth will the salvation of all men by his revealed will, or *voluntate signi*, this alone will sufficiently infer our intended conclusion—that he truly wills the salvation of all, without the exemption of any. Upon such as contradict this doctrine, it lies upon them to prove, not the negative only, that

God doth not will the salvation of all by his secret will, but this positive particular, that God doth nill or unwill the salvation of some by his secret will, whose salvation he willeth by his revealed will. Now, if it be answered that he doth by his secret will or good pleasure unwill or nill the salvation of the same parties to whom he willeth salvation by his will revealed or signified, they must without remedy acknowledge the one or the other member of this divi- 78
sion: as, either 'that there be two wills in God of as different inclinations, *ad extra*, as the reasonable and sensitive appetite are in man;' or, 'that there is a manifest contradiction in the object of one and the same divine will.' That 'all men should be saved,' and that 'some men should not be saved,' implieth as formal a contradiction as to say, 'all men are living creatures, some men are no living creatures.' Now that all men should be living creatures, and that some men should not be living creatures, falleth not within the object of omnipotency. And if the will of God be as truly undivided in itself as the omnipotent power is, it is no less impossible that the salvation of all and the non-salvation of some should be the object, or true parts of the object, of one and the same divine will undivided in itself, than that the actual salvation of all and the actual and final condemnation of some, or the non-salvation of all, should be really affected by the omnipotent power. Whether this divine will be clearly revealed, or in part revealed and in part reserved or secret, in respect of us, all is one, so this will in itself and in its nature be but one and undivided. The manifestation or reservation of it, or whatsoever other references it may have to us, can neither increase nor abate the former contradiction in the object; or if *voluntas signi* be not essentially the

same with *voluntas beneplaciti*, there is a manifest contradiction or contrariety betwixt them, if the salvation of all be the object of the one, and the non-salvation or reprobation of others be the object of the other.

5. Yet do we not, like rigorous critics, so much intend the utter banishment of this distinction out of the confines of divinity, as the confinement of it to its proper seat and place. Rightly confined or limited, it may bear faith and allegiance to the truth, and open some passages for clearing some branches of it; but permitted to use that extent of liberty which hath been given to it by some, it will make way for canonization of jesuitical perjuries, for deification of mental evasions or reservations. Let us compare jesuitical practices with that pattern which is the necessary resultance of some men's interpretation of God's oath in this case. Were this interrogatory put to any jesuitical assassinate (imagine a powder-plotter), 'Do you will or intend the ruin of the king or state, or do you know of any such project or intendment?' there is none of this crew so mischievously minded, but would be ready to swear unto this negative: 'As the Lord liveth, and as I hope for life and salvation by him, I neither intend the ruin of king or state, nor do I know of any conspiracy against him.' And yet, in case the event should evidently discover his protestation to be most false, yet would he rest persuaded that this or the like mental evasion or reservation, 'I neither intended the ruin of king or state, so they would become Roman catholics; nor did I know of any conspiracy against them, with mind or purpose to reveal it to them,' may be a preservative more than sufficient, a sovereign antidote against the sin of perjury which he had swallowed or harboured in his

breast, specially if the concealment of his treason make for the good of the church. To put the like interrogatory unto the Almighty Judge concerning the ruin or welfare of men, no magistrate, no authority of earth, hath any power; yet he, to free himself from that foul aspersion which the Jews had cast upon him, (as if such as perished in their sins had therefore perished because it was his will and pleasure they should not 79
live, but die,) hath interposed his often-mentioned voluntary oath, *As I live, I will not the death of him that dies, but rather that he should live.* Shall it here be enough to make answer for him, *interpretando*, by interpreting his meaning to be this:— 'I do not will the death of him that dies, so he will repent, which I know he cannot do; nor do I will his non-repentance, with purpose to make this part of my will known to him: however, according to my secret and reserved will, I have resolved never to grant him the means, without which he cannot possibly repent; whereas, without repentance, he cannot live, but must die?' But did God's oath give men no better assurance than this interpretation of it doth, I see no reason (yet heartily wish that others might see more) why any man should so much blame the Jesuits for secret evasions or mental reservations in matter of oath; for the performance of our oaths in the best manner that we are capable of is but an observance of a particular branch of that general precept, *Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Who, then, can justly challenge the Jesuit of imperfection or falsehood, much less of perjury, for secret evasions or mental reservations, when his life is called in question, if once it be granted that the God of truth, in matter of oath concerning the eternal life or death of more men than the Jesuits have to deal with, doth use the like?

6. In matters, then, determined by divine oath, the distinction of *voluntas signi* and *beneplaciti* can have no place, specially in their doctrine who make the bare entity or personal being of men the immediate object of the immutable decree concerning life and death everlasting; for the entity or personal being of man is so indivisible, that an universal negation and a particular affirmation of the same thing (to wit, salvation) falling upon man as man, or upon the personal being of men, draws to the strictest point of contradiction. Far ever be it from us to think that God should swear unto this universal negative, *I will not the death of the man that dieth*, and yet believe withal that he wills the death of some men that die, as they are men, or as they are the sons of Adam; that he should by his secret or reserved will recall any part of his will declared by oath; that he should proclaim an universal pardon to all the sons of Adam under the seal of his oath, and yet exempt many from all possibility of receiving any benefit by it.

7. Shall we, then, conclude that the former distinction hath no use at all in divinity? Or if this conclusion be too rigorous, let us see in what cases it may have place, or to what particulars it may be confined. First, it hath place in matters of threatening, or of plagues not denounced by oath. Thus God by his prophet Jonas did signify his will to have Nineveh destroyed at forty days' end: this was *voluntas signi*, and he truly intended what he signified: yet was it his *voluntas beneplaciti*, his good-will and pleasure at the very same time, the Ninevites should repent and live: and by their repentance his good-will and pleasure was fulfilled in their safety. But in this case there was no contrariety between God's will declared or signified, i. e. *voluntas signi*, and his good-will and

pleasure, i. e. *voluntas beneplaciti;* no contradiction in the object of his will, however considered; for that was not one and the same, but much different in respect of God's will signified by Jonas, and of his good-will and pleasure, which, not signified by him, was fulfilled. One and the same immutable will or decree of God did from eternity award two dooms, much different, unto Nineveh, taking it as it stood 80 affected when Jonas threatened destruction unto it, or as it should continue so affected, and taking it as it proved upon the judgment threatened. All the alteration was in Nineveh, none in God's will or decree; and Nineveh being altered to the better, the selfsame rule of justice doth not deal with it after the selfsame manner. The doom or sentence could not be the same without some alteration in the Judge, who is unalterable; and in that he is unalterably just and good, his doom or award was of necessity to alter, as the object of it altered: *Deus sæpe mutat sententiam, nunquam consilium;* "God's unchangeable will or counsel doth often change his doom or sentence." The same rule holds thus far true in matter of blessing or promise not confirmed by oath; upon the parties' alteration unto worse unto whom the promise is made, the blessing promised may be revoked, without any alteration of God's will or counsel; yet may we not say that the death or destruction of any to whom God promiseth life is so truly the object of his good-will and pleasure, as the life and salvation of them is unto whom he threateneth destruction. The same distinction is of good use in some extraordinary cases, or as applied to men after they have made up the full measure of their iniquity, and are cut off from all possibility of repentance. Thus God willed Pharaoh to let his people go out of Egypt, and signified this his will

unto him by Moses and Aaron in mighty signs and wonders. This was *voluntas signi* only, not *voluntas beneplaciti*; for though it were his good-will and pleasure that his people should depart out of Egypt, yet was it no branch of this his good-will and pleasure that Pharaoh should now repent, or be willing to let them go. Rather, it was his good-will and pleasure, specially after the seventh plague, to have the heart of Pharaoh hardened; and yet, after his heart was so hardened that it could not repent, God so punished him as if it had been free and possible for him to repent, and grant a friendly pass unto his people. But Pharaoh's case was extraordinary; his punishment so exemplary, as not to be drawn into example: for, as our apostle intimates, it was an argument of God's great mercy and longsuffering to permit Pharaoh to live any longer on earth, after he was become a vessel of wrath, destinated to everlasting punishment in hell. The reason why God thus plagued Pharaoh for not doing that which now he could not do, (all possibility of amendment being taken from him,) was to teach all generations following, by his fearful end, to beware of his desperate beginnings, of struggling with God, or of persecuting them whose patronage he had in peculiar manner undertaken. And here again there is no contradiction between these two propositions: 'God from all eternity did will the death of Pharaoh;' 'God from all eternity did not will the death, but rather the life, of Pharaoh:' for albeit Pharaoh continued one and the same man from his birth unto his death, yet did he not all this time continue one and the same object of God's immutable will and eternal decree; this object did alter as Pharaoh's dispositions or affections towards God or his neighbours altered. There is no contrariety, much

less any contradiction, between these: 'God unfeignedly loveth all men;' 'God doth not love but hate the reprobate, although they be men, yea, the greatest part of men.' For here the object of his love and hate is not the same: he loves all men unfeignedly as they are men, or as men which have not made up the full measure of iniquity; but having made up that, or having their souls betrothed unto wickedness, he hates 81
them. His hate of them as reprobates is no less necessary or usual than his love of them as men; but though he necessarily hates them being once become reprobates, or having made up the full measure of iniquity, yet was there no necessity laid upon them by his eternal decree to make up such a measure of iniquity.

8. How these deductions will consort with some modern catechisms, I do not know; sure I am, they are consonant to the opinion of that learned bishop and blessed martyr in his Preface to his Expositions of the Ten Commandments; a fit catechism for a bishop to make. Every man is called in the scripture *wicked*, and *the enemy of God*, for the privation and lack of faith and love that he oweth to God: *Et impii vocantur, qui non omnino sunt pii:* that is, they are called wicked that in all things honour not God, believe not in God, and observe not his commandments as they should do; which we cannot do by reason of this natural infirmity or hatred of the flesh, as Paul calleth it, against God. In this sense taketh Paul this word *wicked:* so must we interpret St. Paul and take his words, or else no man should be damned. Now we know that Paul himself, St. John, and Christ damneth the contemners of God, or such as willingly continue in sin, and will not repent. Those the scripture excludeth from the general promise of

grace. Thou seest by the places afore-rehearsed, that though we cannot believe in God as undoubtedly as is required, by reason of this our natural sickness and disease, yet for Christ's sake in the judgment of God we are accounted as faithful believers, for whose sake this natural disease and sickness is pardoned, by what name soever St. Paul calleth the natural infirmity or original sin in man. And this imperfection or natural sickness taken of Adam excludeth not the person from the promise of God in Christ, except we transgress the limits and bounds of this original sin by our own folly and malice, and either of a contempt or hate of God's word we fall into sin, and transform ourselves into the image of the devil. Then we exclude by this means ourselves from the promises and merits of Christ, who only received our infirmities and original disease, and not the contempt of him and his law.

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SECTION III.

That God's Good-will and Pleasure is never frustrated, albeit his unspeakable Love take no Effect in many to whom it is unfeignedly tendered.

CHAP. XVI.

In what Sense God may be said to have done all that he could for his Vineyard, or for such as perish.

1. To found both parts of a contradiction in truth falls not within the sphere of omnipotency, and we may, with consent of all divines, maintain it to be impossible. The true original, as well of our aptness

to conceive difficulties in the points proposed, as of our ignorance in assoiling them, is because we extend not this maxim so far as it naturally would reach; and the reason why we extend it not so far, is our proneness to extend our own power to the utmost, and, for the most part, farther than justice or true goodness can accompany it. It is our nature to be humorous, and the nature of humour to be unconstant. Fortune's character may be every son of Adam's motto, *Tantum constans in levitate*, "Only constant in unconstancy;" and being such, nothing can imply any constant contradiction to our nature; nothing that is truly and constantly the same, but will one time or other contradict our changeable and inconstant humours; and these, enraged with contradiction, do, tyrant-like, arm power, without just trial or examination, without either respect or reverence, against whatsoever contradicts them. The right use of power in creatures merely sensitive is to satiate their appetites of sense; for nothing hath power to move itself but what is sensitive; and all power, whether of body or mind, was bestowed on man for the execution of his will, or accomplishing his desire of good; but since his will by his fall became irregular, and his desires corrupt, his power is become like a common officer or under-commander to all his unruly appetites, domineering by turn or succession, all other inclinations being under the command of it. So the wise man hath charactered the resolution of voluptuous men, chap. ii. 6: *Come on therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth:* and ver. 11. *Let our strength be the law of justice; for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth.* Even in such as are by most esteemed good men and sober, those notions of truth and equity which are

83 natural and implanted are so weak and ill taken, that rather than upstart carnal appetites or desires which custom countenanceth should be enraged through their reluctance, they presently yield their consents to such proposals, as, were they resolute, firm, and constant, would as offensively contradict them as punishment or pain doth our sense of pleasure. Unto such proposals we often yield as are impossible to be approved by Equity, to whom we usually profess our dearest love and allegiance, with promises to frame our lives by her rules. But love in us (whether one simple and indivisible quality, or an aggregation or cluster of divers inclinations, all rooted in one centre) is not alike set on divers objects: hence, when it comes to opposition between sense and reason, between ourselves, our private friends, and common equity, it divides itself unequally. The particular inconveniences whereto we are daily exposed, by the inordinate love of the world and the flesh, are infinite: all may be reduced to these two originals: first, it blinds our judgments, and makes our intentions seem upright and just to our partial desires, or at least not incompatible with the rules of equity, whenas to impartial judgments they are palpably unjust: secondly, having blinded our judgments, it forthwith abuseth our power or authority, to effect whatsoever is not for the present apprehended for a gross and evident wrong. So that nothing whereon our love or liking is for the present mainly set, seems any way impossible unto us, unless it be altogether without the compass of our power; and through the variousness of our humorous disposition, that which we cannot like or admit to-day will be allowed of to-morrow; but though there be none that doth good, no not one, yet some there be do less evil than others; and seeing those amongst us whose

love to equity is more strong and constant than their neighbours' are always drawn with greater difficulty to dispense with truth or approve unjustice, the consequence necessarily amounting from this experimented truth is, that if any man's judgment in matters of equity and justice were infallible, and his love to justice and known equity altogether constant and invincible, it would be impossible for him to transgress in judgment. Thus, as well the strength of unconstant humorous desires, as the faintness of love or equity, (both which most men may experience in themselves,) as the contrary virtues, (which they may observe in some few,) jointly conspire to rectify our conceit of God, in whom the ideal perfection of the one's integrity and constancy is without all mixture of the other's vice or humorous impotency.

2. The first rule for right extending the former maxim, 'To make both parts of a contradiction true is no part of the object of power omnipotent,' would be this: Many effects which are very possible to power alone considered, or as it hath the mastery over weak inclinations unto equity, necessarily imply a direct and manifest contradiction unto some divine attributes, no less infinite or immutable than almighty power. Hence it follows, that many effects or designs which seem possible to the human nature may be impossible or most incongruous to the divine. It is more shameful than impossible for rich men to lie and cozen, or for magistrates to oppress and wrong their inferiors, albeit the one's riches or other's power were infinitely increased without internal increase of their fidelity; but to him that is eternally true and just, yea eternal truth and justice, it is as impossible to speak an untruth or do wrong, as for truth to be a lie, or justice to be 84 unjust. Many things, then, are possible to mere

power, which are impossible to it as linked with truth or love; and many things, again, possible to it as linked with these, which yet directly contradict the eternal pattern of justice or goodness, and are by consequent impossible to the Almighty, who is no less just and good than powerful. Many pirates by sea, or robbers by land, might they enjoy but half the power and authority for a month whereof ordinary princes by inheritance are possessed, would do their companions and friends more good, and work their enemies greater spoil in this short space, than any monarch can do in his whole reign, which holds it a point of majesty to moderate his actions by that princely rule, *Princeps id potest quod jure potest*, "Princes can do no more than they can do justly." In this sense, I think we may truly say, all before Christ were thieves and robbers, or in respect of him very unjust: not Abraham, David, Ezekiah, Josias, not one of the prophets, might they have but half that power and authority committed to them over angels for a night which the Son of God from everlasting had without robbery, but would have thought it very possible to have removed the Roman army with as great terror, loss, and disgrace, as the angel of the Lord sometimes had done the Assyrians from Jerusalem's siege, whose fatal destruction God incarnate clearly foreseeing bewailed with tears, but would not, but could not prevent; for to the King of everlasting righteousness that only was possible which was justly possible; and though he were a Father to Israel, and the Prince of Peace, yet he approves a most bloody and merciless war before an unjust peace, and disgraceful to eternal Majesty; for so the prophet had said in his name before, *There is no peace unto the wicked*, to such as stubbornly abandon the ways of peace, and wilfully neglect saving

health, so often and lovingly tendered unto them; *hos salus ipsa servare non potuit*, and shall infinite power save them whom infinite salvation cannot save?

3. To have smitten the men of Sodom with blindness, before lust had entered in at their eyes, had been a work as easy to almighty power as blinding them in the attempt or prosecution of lust conceived; but that contradiction which the prevention of this sin did not imply unto God's power, it did (all circumstances considered) necessarily imply unto his justice, by whose immutable and eternal rules they were left unguarded against these foul temptations, for wilful contempt of his goodness, for abusing his longsuffering and lovingkindness. But did it imply any contradiction to his goodness or lovingkindness to have prevented the Sodomites' former contempt or abuse of them? Out of question it did unto his eternal equity, *for all his ways are mercy and truth.* And these Sodomites' wilfulness presupposed, the eternal rule of his goodness and lovingkindness had appointed justice to debar them, as now they are, from reaping those fruits whereof his goodness, as they were men, had made them capable. The principle whence the just proof of these seeming paradoxes, as also the right explication of all difficulties in this argument, must be derived, is a school maxim borrowed from orthodoxal antiquity now not much used, but of much use in true divinity, and for this reason to be more fully insisted upon in the treatise of man's first estate. The maxim itself is briefly thus: 'It is impossible for man or other substance to be absolutely impeccable from his creation.' Only he that is infinite in being is infinitely good, and infinite goodness only implies an absolute 85
impossibility of being bad. As God only essentially

is, so he only is essentially and immutably good; all things besides him are, or sometimes were, subject to mutability, as well in essence as in their state and condition. Power omnipotent could not from the first creation have pared off all mutability from man's moral goodness, without perishing the only possible root of his eternal and immutable happiness. To decline to evil implies no contradiction to being simply, but only to omnipotent being: it is so possible to all creatures, that without this possibility it were, as we shall afterwards prove, impossible for them to be truly like their Creator for a moment in that attribute whose participation is the only assurance of their eternal weal. If God, either by his omnipotent power or infinite wisdom, had necessarily, though without any violence, restrained this possibility in man of declining from good to evil, man had forthwith ceased to have been truly and inherently good, and, ceasing to be such, had utterly lost all possibilities of that estate whose pledge or earnest he received in his creation. God's goodness is his happiness, and his participative goodness is the foundation of man's happiness; so that not God's justice only, but that lovingkindness whereby he created man, and appointed him as heir apparent of life eternal, did remove all necessity from his will, because the imposition of necessity, whether laid upon him by power or wisdom infinite, had utterly extinguished that goodness wherein it was only possible for the creature to express the Creator's goodness manifested in his creation. Now that was not God's essential or immutable goodness, for that is incommunicable. All the goodness man is capable of doth but express God's goodness communicative; it is the stamp of it communicated. As God, then, did communicate his goodness to his creatures not by necessity, but freely,

so could not the creature be truly good (that is, like his God) by necessity, but freely; nor was it possible for him to have been either confirmed in such goodness as he had, or translated to everlasting happiness, but by continuing freely good for some space, or less evil, than by the liberty which God by his immutable law had given him in his creation he possibly might have been. Continuing good, though but for a while, without necessity, the riches of God's free bounty had been continually increased towards him, and had finally established him in everlasting bliss by confirmation of him in true goodness, or by investing him with immortality. Since his fall, we are not usually capable of mercy, or of the increase of his bounty, much less of these everlasting fruits whereof blessings temporal are the pledges, but by free abstinence from some evils unto whose practices the possibility of our corrupted nature might be improved; and albeit we do not alway that which is in its nature evil, yet we can do nothing well, but even the good which we do, we do it naughtily; yet unless we do both less evil, and the good which we do less naughtily than we possibly might do, God still diminisheth the riches of his bounty towards us; and by inhibiting the sweet influence of his gracious providence, suffers us to fall from one wickedness to another, being prone to run headlong into all, if once the reins of our unruly appetites be given into our unwieldy hands. Far be it from any son of Adam to think he is able, without God's love and favour, to withdraw himself from the extremities of mischief, much less to do such good as may make him capable of well-doing. So strong is our love to 86
sinful pleasures, since our first parents gave the reins unto our appetite, that none can recall themselves or repent without the attractions of infinite love; and yet

many whom this infinite love doth daily embrace, because they apprehend not it, are never brought by the attractions of it to true repentance: *Despisest thou the riches of his goodness,* saith the apostle (Rom. ii. 4), *his forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Of whom speaks he thus? of such only as truly repent, and *by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and immortality?* Nay, but of them who *for hardness of heart cannot repent, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.*

4. Were the riches of his bounty therefore feigned, or did he only proffer but not purpose to draw them unto repentance which repented not? This is no part of our heavenly Father's perfection, no fruit of that wisdom which is from above, but a point of earthly policy devoid of honesty, a mere trick of worldly wit, to whose practice nothing but weakness and impotence to accomplish great desires can mis-incline man's corrupted nature. But doth it not argue the like impotency, though no such want of integrity in God, not to effect what he wills more ardently and more unfeignedly, than man can do the increase or continuance of his welfare, or avoidance of endless misery? No; it being supposed (as we have said) that man is not capable of endless joys, unless he will be wrought by mere love, without the impulsions of unresistible power, unfeignedly to love him that hath prepared them for him, the same infinite love which continually draws him unto repentance was in congruity to leave him a possibility not to be drawn by it: for coactive penitency would have frustrated the end to which repentance is but a mean subordinate. The employment or exercise of God's almighty power to make men repent

against their wills, or before they were wrought to a willingness by the sweet attractions of his infinite love, or by threatenings of judgments not infinite or irresistible, would be like the endeavours of a loving father, more strong than circumspect, who, out of pity to his son whom he sees ready to be choked with water, should strangle him by violent haling him to the shore. Most men, by ascribing that unto God's power which is the peculiar and essential effect of his love, do finally miss of that good, which both infallibly conspire to pour without measure upon all such as take right and orderly hold of them. How shall we then fasten our faith to them aright? We are to believe that God's infinite power shall effect, without control or check of any thing in heaven or earth, all things possible for their endless good that truly love him, but constrains no man's will to love him, being always armed against wilful neglecters of his unfeigned love. No man would argue his love to be less than infinite, because not able to produce the effects of infinite power; and as little reason we have to think that power, though infinite, should be the true immediate parent of love, which never springs in any reasonable creature but from the seeds of love or loveliness sown in the human soul, though they do not always prosper. Constraint, because it is the proper and immediate effect of power, is a companion fit for lust, whose satisfaction breeds rather a loathing of the parties constrained, than any good will or purpose to reward them for being unwilling, unloving, or impatient passives; nothing but true unforced love can yield contentment unto love. Needy man, to whom benevolences though wrested are ever grateful, cannot be induced to love the parties from whom they are wrested: for, *Non tantum ingratum sed invisum est beneficium superbe datum;* 87

" Good offices, whilst they are presented by pride, are not only ungrateful, but odious." But God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man, as he esteems no gifts, (howsoever given,) so he always detests the niggardly backwardness, and loves the cheerfulness of the giver.

5. From these discussions the truth of the former rule, with the right solution of the main problem proposed, may be illustrated by examples of divers kinds in subjects known and familiar. Be the charge never so great, so the exonerations be well nigh equal, the incomes are less than if their charge were little, and their exonerations none; or, be a man's revenues never so large, so his necessary expenses be no less, he shall not be able to do as much for his friend in some real kindness, as he whose estate is not half so great, if so his annual expenses be ten times less. In like case, though man's love to his dearest friend be (in respect of God's love to us) but faint, and his power but small, yet because his love to justice is much less, or rather his partiality greater, he ofttimes effects that for his temporal good, which God, though infinite in power, doth not effect for those whom he infinitely loves; for the bequests or grants made unto man by his infinite love must undergo the examination of justice and equity. What are alike infinite, before they pass the irrevocable seal of infinite power, one of these cannot attempt, much less absolutely bring aught to pass, without the other's consent. Infinite love cannot oversway either God's incomprehensible wisdom to devise, or his omnipotency to practise means for man's salvation, which contradict the unchangeable rules of infinite equity. His love is as truly indivisible as infinite, and is for this reason more indissolubly linked unto the unchangeable rules of his own justice

or equity, than unto mankind, whose goodness in his best estate was but mutable; nor are any of Adam's posterity so capable of that infinite mercy wherewith God embraceth them, as God's justice and majesty are of his infinite love. These being, as he is, absolutely immutable, are throughout eternity immutably loved of him, who indivisibly is Majesty, Justice, Love, immutable.

CHAP. XVII.

The Truth and Ardency of God's Love unto such as perish testified by our Saviour and by St. Paul.

1. THESE are no paradoxes, but plain truth; without whose acknowledgment we shall hardly find any true sense or good meaning in God's protestations of sorrow for his people's plagues, or in his expostulations of their unthankfulness, or in his kind invitations of them to repentance which never repent, or in his tender proffers of salvation to those which perish: *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not* 88
good, after their own thoughts, &c. Isa. lxv. 2. His infinite power expects their conversion as the mariner doth the turning of the tide, but may not transport them into the land of promise until his lovingkindness have converted them. The unremovable rules of eternal equity will not suffer him to stretch out his hands any farther than he doth towards the sons of men; and when the measure of their iniquity is accomplished, his infinite justice will not suffer him to stretch them out so far any longer: albeit he cannot then without unfeigned sorrow withdraw them from those to whom in love unfeigned he hath stretched them out. Thus Jerusalem's iniquity, being come to the full, did fill our Redeemer's heart with woe, and

his eyes with tears: *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes,* Luke xix. 42. Did he speak this as man, or doth not the Spirit say the same? He that spake this, spake nothing but words of spirit and life, nothing but the words of God, if we may believe that he meant as he hath spoken: *I have not spoken* (saith he [q]) *of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* His bowels of compassion were freely extended towards them, from that exact conformity which his spotless and blessed soul held with God's infinite love, and yet restrained again by that conformity which it as exactly held with the eternal rules of God's infinite justice or equity; and from these different motions or distractions, thus occasioned from that indissoluble union of his divisible soul with these two different attributes of the indivisible nature, were his tears squeezed out. He wept then as man, not as God; and yet in this human passion did visibly act that part which God before his incarnation had penned, as a sensible memorial of his unconceivable love: *O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.* Psalm lxxxi. 13—16. Wheat and honey, here promised, were emblems of better

[q] John xii. 49, 50.

blessings purposed towards them; and thus avouching this his purpose under no character of courtly compliment, but in the form of legal assurance, his words are undoubted tokens of unfeigned love, and desire unquenchable of their welfare, that did not prosper. Israel might have said, as Jerusalem afterwards did of her sorrow, *Was there ever any love like unto this love wherewith the Lord embraced me in the days of my youth?* Notwithstanding, this excessive fervency of his lovingkindness (whose will is infinite) laid no necessity upon their wills to whom he wished all this good: they had a liberty left them by eternal equity to refuse it. He, out of the wishes of his bounty, as he protesteth, was ready to pour out his best blessings according to the immensity of his lovingkindness, so Israel would open his mouth wide to receive them: *But my people* (saith he) *would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.* Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12.

2. Lord, who had sinned, the heathen people or their forefathers, in like manner as Israel did, that *in times past thou sufferedst them all to walk in their own* 89 *ways?* Acts xiv. 16. *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy,* saith the prophet Jonah, ii. 8. Never hadst thou given them up to their own hearts' lust, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, had they not despised the riches of thy bounty, whose current, nevertheless, was not altogether diverted from their posterity: *To them thou leftest not thyself without a witness, in that thou didst good, and gavest them rain from heaven in fruitful seasons, filling their hearts, with food and gladness.* To all nations, even in the time of darkness, when they were strangers from thee, these and the like temporal and sensible

blessings were unquestionable earnests of thy everlasting love, since more fully manifested; for *thou so lovedst the world,* (not Israel only,) *that thou gavest thine only begotten Son, to the end that whoso believed in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* What further argument of God's infinite love could flesh and blood desire, than the Son of God's voluntary suffering that in our flesh, by his Father's appointment, which unto flesh and blood seems most distasteful? That this love was unfeignedly tendered to all at least that have heard, or hereafter may hear of it, without exception, what demonstration from the effect can be more certain, what consequence more infallible, than the inference of this truth is from a sacred truth received by all good Christians; viz. "All such as have heard God's love in Christ proclaimed, and not believed in it, shall in the day of judgment appear guilty of greater sins than their forefathers could be indited of, and undergo more bitter death than any corruption drawn from Adam, if Christ had never suffered, could have bred?" I shall no way wrong the apostle in unfolding his exhortations to the Athenians thus far; but they rather offer the Spirit, by which he spake, some kind of violence, that would contract his meaning shorter: *The times of this ignorance* (before Christ's death) *God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Acts xvii. 30, 31.

3. Why all men in the world have not heard of God's infinite love thus manifested, many causes may hereafter be assigned, all grounded upon God's infinite justice or mercy. Of Christ's death, many which heard

not, might have heard; many which are not, might have been partakers; save only for their free and voluntary progress from evil to worse, or wilful refusal of God's lovingkindness daily proffered to them in such pledges as they were well content to swallow; foolishly esteeming these good in themselves, being good only as they plight the truth of God's love to them, which he manifested in the death of his Son. With this manifestation of his love, many again, out of mere mercy, have not been acquainted; lest the sight of the medicine might have caused their disease to rage, and make their case more lamentably desperate.

CHAP. XVIII. 90

Want of Consideration, or Ignorance of God's unfeigned Love to such as perish, a principal Means or Occasion why so many perish.

1. BUT if the most part of men, as we cannot deny, do finally perish, what shall it avail to revive this doctrine of God's infinite love to all, by whose fruitless issue he rather is made an infinite loser, than men any gainers? As for God, he hath from eternity infallibly forecast the entire redemption, of his infinite love, which unto us may seem utterly cast away. And of men, if many die whom he would have live, (for his will is, that *all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*,) the fault is their own, or their instructors', that seek not the prevention of their miscarriage by acquainting them with this celestial fountain of saving truth, whose taste we labour to exhibit unto all, because the want of it, in observation of the heathen, is the first spring of human misery[r]. Or, in language

[r] Heu primæ scelerum causæ mortalibus ægris naturam nescire Deum.—Silius Italicus, lib. 4. ver. 794. de Bello Punico.

more plain, or pertinent to the argument proposed, most men reap no benefit from God's unspeakable love, because not considering it to be his nature, they do not believe it to be as he is, truly infinite, unfeignedly extended to all that call him Maker. But had the doctrines which those divine oracles, *God is love, and would have all men to be saved*—naturally afford, been for these forty years last past as generally taught, and their right use continually pressed with as great zeal and fervency, as the doctrine and uses of God's absolute decree, for electing some and reprobating most, in that space have been, the plentiful increase of God's glory and his people's comfort throughout this land might have wrought such astonishment to our adversaries, as would have put their malicious mouths to silence. Who would not be willing to be saved, if he were fully persuaded that God did will his salvation in particular, because he protests he wills not the death of any, but the repentance of all, that all might live? Or were the particulars of this doctrine, unto whose generality every loyal member of the Church of England hath subscribed, generally taught and believed, all would unfeignedly endeavour with fervent alacrity to be truly happy, because none could suspect himself to be excluded from his unfeigned and fervent love, who is true happiness; whose love and goodness is so great, that he cannot pass any act, whereby any of his creatures should be debarred either from being like him in love and goodness, or being such, from being like him in true happiness: but, alas! while the world is borne in hand that the Creator ofttimes dispenseth the blessings of this life, not as undoubted pledges of a better, but deals with most men as man doth with beasts, feeding them fattest which are appointed first to be slain; the magnificent praise of his

bounty secretly nurseth such a mispersuasion in most men of his goodness, (at least towards them,) as the epigrammatist had of a professed benefactor, that shewed him (as he thought) little kindness in great benevolence:

Munera magna quidem misit, sed misit in hamo,
Et piscatorem piscis amare potest?

Great gifts he sent, but under his gifts 91
There covered lay an hook,
And by the fish to be beloved
Can the cunning fisher look?

2. The frequency of sinister respects, in dispensing of secular dignities or benevolences, makes such as are truly kind to be either unregarded or mistrusted by such as stand in need of their kindness. And as fishes in beaten waters will nibble at the bait, although they suspect the hook, so the world hath learned the wit to take good turns, and not to be taken by them, as suspecting them to be proffered in cunning rather than in true kindness; and cunning, where it is discovered or suspected, is usually requited with craft; love only hath just title unto love. The most part indeed are so worldly wise, that none but fools will easily trust them; howbeit, our natural mistrust of others makes all of us a great deal worse than we would be. And as if we thought it a sin, or point of uncharitableness, to prove other men's conjectures, that measure our dispositions by their own, altogether false, we fit our demeanours to their misdeemings of us, and resolve rather to do amiss than they should think amiss: howbeit, even in this perfidious and faithless age, the old saying is not quite out of date, *Ipsa fides habita obligat fidem;* Many would be more trusty than they are, and do much better by us than they do, would we wholly commit ourselves to their trust and kindness.

Now, though by man's goodness or badness God can neither become worse nor better in himself; yet the riches of his bounty, or communication of his goodness, are still multiplied towards those that steadfastly believe him to be such as he is—one whom all are bound to love, because he is so kind and loving; one whom all may safely trust, because his lovingkindness is so utterly void of partiality, being armed with power and justice infinite: *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.* Psalm xxxvi. 6, 7. This especially should move all to admire his lovingkindness, that he loved all without any other motive than his own mere goodness or lovingkindness, either to incline his will or stir up his power to give them a being like his own: *We love him,* (saith St. John,) *because he loved us first.* Do all then, whom he unfeignedly loves, love him unfeignedly? Would God they did! for so (as his will is) all should be saved. Did then the apostle mean that his love to us is no true cause of our love to him? Yes: yet not simply as it is in him, but as, being unfeignedly in him, it is truly apprehended by us. Ingenuous love is never lawfully begotten or fully conceived but from an apprehension of true loveliness in the object; and nothing can be more lovely than love itself, when it is firmly apprehended or undoubtedly known.

3. Though secret consciousness of our own unloveliness in the state of nature makes us ofttimes too mistrustful of others' love; yet unto our nature unregenerate, and overgrown with corruption, it is almost impossible not to love them whose love to us we

assuredly know to be unfeigned, unless their behaviour be very loathsome: howbeit, even so, we love their persons, though not their presence, wherewith again 92
we willingly dispense, if it may gratify us in other things which we much desire. That which makes the world's condemnation so just that infinite mercy may not dispense with it, is men's dull backwardness to love Him, of whose glorious beauty the most glorious, most admired creatures are but fleeting shadows, no true pictures; him, of whose infinite love and unfeigned preventions in unrecompensable benefits, all the pleasures we take in health, the joy of strength, the sweetness of life itself, and whatsoever in it is good and lovely, are infallible pledges; and yet his intention in free bestowing them is to bind himself (more strictly than man is bound by receiving the just price of what he bargains for) to instate us in the incomprehensible joys of endless life!

He requires nothing at our hand, but that we may be more capable of his lovingkindness, by drawing still nearer and nearer to him, with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our strength; of whose least portion he is sole maker and preserver, of all whose motions he is sole author and guide. From participation of his favour or presence, whatsoever is good in them is undoubtedly capable of increase. The services wherein the eternal King requires demonstration of this our love are not so hard as those which we willingly perform to corruptible men, not invested with any shadow of his loveliness, nor seasoned with any tincture of his lovingkindness; to men, that cannot be so beneficial as loving to their friends, nor half so loving as they are lovely, though their loveliness come far short of their greatness. Far otherwise it is with him whose greatness and majesty are truly infinite; he is

as glorious and lovely as great, as loving as lovely, and yet withal no less beneficial than loving to those which love him and do his will.

4. This unfeigned love of him, raised from belief of his lovingkindness towards us, is as the first conception or plantation of true happiness, to which, once truly planted, whatsoever in this life can befall us serves as nutriment: *Diligentibus Deum omnia operantur in bonum;* "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

As this article of his goodness and love is to be pressed before any other, so the first and most natural deduction that can be made from this or any other sacred principle, and that which every one when he first comes to enjoy the use of reason should be taught to make by heart, is this: "He that gave me life endued with sense, and beautified my sense with reason, before I could desire one or other of them, or know what *being* meant, hath doubtless a purpose to give me with them whatsoever good things my heart, my sense, or reason can desire; even life, or being, as far surpassing all goodness flesh and blood can conceive or desire, as this present life I now enjoy doth my former not being, or my desireless want of being what now I am." These are principles which elsewhere (by God's assistance) shall be more at large extended; yet would I have the reader ever to remember, that the infinite love wherewith God sought us when we were not, by which he found out a beginning for mankind, fitted as a foundation for endless life, can never be indissolubly betrothed unto the bare being which he bestowed upon us: the final contract betwixt him and us necessarily presupposeth a bond or link of mutual love. There is no means possible for us to be made better or

happier than we are, but by unfeigned loving him, which out of love hath made us what we are. Nor are we what we are, because he is, or from his essence only, but because he was loving to us: and after our love to him enclasped with his unspeakable and unchangeable love to us, whose apprehension must beget it, the faith by which it is begotten in us assures our souls of all the good means the infinity of goodness may vouchsafe to grant, the infinity of wisdom can contrive, or power omnipotent is able to practise, for attaining the end whereto his infinite love from all eternities doth ordain us. And who could desire better encouragement or assurance, more strong than this, for the recompense of all his labours? or if all this cannot suffice to allure us, he hath set fear behind us, to impel us unto goodness, or rather before us, to turn us back from evil.

CHAP. XIX.

How God, of a most loving Father, becomes a severe inexorable Judge.

1. But if God, as we have said, be love, shall not his love be like his nature, altogether unchangeable? How then shall he punish his beloved creatures, or anger, hate, or jealousy have any place or seat in the Omnipotent Majesty? Can these consort with infinite mercy? Many philosophers have freed God from anger, making him author only of grace and favour towards men; and I could wish their heresies had been better refuted than they are, or at least that men would be better persuaded of such refutation as Lactantius hath bestowed upon them, albeit I will not bind myself to stand to his decision of this point, but rather illustrate by instance or experiment how ex-

treme severity may stand with the fervency of fatherly unfeigned love.

2. Few men's hearts would have served them to have dealt with their own bowels as Torquatus did with his, [s]howbeit, in all that mighty people amongst whom he lived, I am persuaded but a few had taken the like care and pains to train up their children in the most commendable qualities of that age: not one would have adventured his own person further, to have rescued his son from the enemy, or justified him in any honourable quarrel. In these and the like points he had, and upon just occasion would further have manifested as much unfeigned love as any father could unto his son, more than the imbecility of sex would suffer a tender-hearted mother to make proof of. Doth, then, the adjudging of this his own son to death
94 rightly argue he loved him less than other parents did their children, whose worse deserts they would not

[s] Meroveo certe auget probitatis famam atque justitiæ necatus filius, justissimas utique ob causas, ne quis ipsi diritatem in alienos falso exprobret liberos, vel in suos inauditam sævitiam nullis fultam rationibus: quales nec Posthumius Tiburtus, nec T. Manlius Torquatus olim habuere.—Forcatulus de Gallorum Imperio et Philosopha, lib. 5. Et paulo post. Posthumus Dictator, quia Aulus filius injussus præsidiis egressus hostes fuderat, victorem audacem cædi securi jussit: at Torquatus itidem Latino bello, Cos. filium a Metio Tusculanorum Duce provocatum, et forte detractandæ pugnæ pudore incensum, ac spolia referentem, mactari a lictore mandavit: jure forsitan, cum, teste Paulo Jurisconsulto, parentibus Romanis antiquior esset disciplina militaris charitate liberorum. At qui Gelaor Merovei filius in patrem contumax, in cives procax, in omnes superbus et injurius, pudicis matronis vim intulerat, patres et maritos terruerat, cæciderat fœderatos ac amicos Franci nominis lacessierat. Cumque ex amicissimis aulicis quispiam objecisset Meroveo Lucium Gellium Censorem Romanum, qui filio novercam solicitanti, et præterea parricidium meditanti, ac propemodum convicto, ignovisset, et in reatu constitutum absolvi diligentissime curasset: Ille inquit, boni patris functus est officio, ego boni Ducis: qui debellare hostes didici, et socios honorifice tractare, eorumque ulcisci injurias.

have sentenced so severely? No: it rather proves love and care of martial discipline, and hate to partiality in administration of civil justice, to have been much greater in him than in other parents of his time. The more just and equal the law he transgressed was or might have been, (as, for illustration sake, we will suppose it to have been a law most equal and just,) the more it commends his impartial severity, that would not suffer the violation of it to go unpunished in his dearest son, whom the more desirous he was to make like himself in religious observance of martial discipline, and practice of justice towards the enemy, the readier he was to do justice upon him for doing the contrary. That excessive love which he bare unto his person, whilst his hopeful beginnings did seem to promise an accomplishment of those martial virtues whose first draught he himself had well expressed, turns into extreme severity and indignation after he proves transgressor of those fundamental rules by which he had taken his direction, and unto whose observance his desire of posterity was destinated. So it falls out by the unalterable course of nature, or rather by a law more transcendent and immutable than nature itself, that a less love being chained (by reference of subordination between the objects loved) with a greater, cannot dislink itself without some deeper touch of displeasure than if the bond or reference had been none. The nearer the reference, or the stricter the bond, the more violent will the rupture be, and the dissociation more unpleasant, as there is no enmity to the enmity of brethren if the knot of brotherly kindness once fully untie: the reason is, because our love to our brethren is nearest united with the love of ourselves, unto which all other love is in some sort subordinate. True affection is always most displeased

where it is most defeated, where most is deservedly expected, and least performed. Now, as partiality towards ourselves, and indulgence to our inordinate desires, ofttimes begets desire of revenge upon unnatural or unkind brethren, so doth the constant and unpartial love of equity and wholesome laws naturally bring forth just severity towards presumptuous neglecters of them, whose persons we love no less than they do that would plead with tears for their impunity; towards them, unto whom we would give real proof of more tender and true affection than their partial abettors do, could we win them by these or other warrantable means to link their love with ours, or to love that best which most deserveth love: as Seleucus loved his son (for saving the one of whose eyes, both being forfeit by the law, he was contented to lose one of his own) more dearly than most princely mothers do their children—for he loved him as himself—yet could not dispense either with himself or his son, because he loved the public law, and common good that might accrue by his singular example of justice, better than either, better than both.

3. For every man to love himself best, is in our judgment no breach, but rather a foundation of charity; a law to whose performance every man is bound in matters of necessity concerning this life, or in whatsoever may concern the life to come, though not in cases of secular honour or preferment, wherein *Proximus quisque sibi* must, by the law of conscience and fundamental rule of Christianity, give place to *Detur digniori;* but nothing can be so worthy of love or honour as God, who, will we nill we, doth and must enjoy this liberty or privilege of loving himself best; and if he love himself better than he doth any creature, he must love equity and justice better than he

doth any man; for he himself is equity itself, the eternal pattern as well of justice as of mercy; he cannot be unjustly merciful towards those men whom he loves more dearly than any man doth himself; and inasmuch as goodness itself is the essential object of his will, he loves nothing absolutely and irrevocably, but that which is absolutely and immutably good. So was not man in his first creation, much less is he such in his collapsed estate; and yet God's love (so super-infinite is it) extends itself unto our nature so collapsed and polluted with corruption, which he infinitely hates. This his love, which knows no limit in itself, is limited in its effects towards men by the correspondency which they hold or loose with that absolute goodness, or with those eternal rules of equity, justice, or mercy, in which his will is to have man made like him. Such as have been either in *re* or *spe*, though not as they should be, yet such as either infinite lovingkindness can vouchsafe to accept, to cherish, or encourage to go forward as they have begun, or infinite mercy to tolerate in expectation of their repentance, or aversion from their wonted courses; these, if once they finally dissolve the correspondency which they held with mercy, or burst the link which they had in God's love (with reference to that goodness whereto the riches of his bounty daily inviteth them), his displeasure towards them kindles according to the measure of his former mercies or lovingkindness. If, being illuminated by his Spirit, they finally associate themselves to the sons of darkness, or having put on Christ in baptism, they resume their swinish habit, and make a sport of wallowing in the mire, the sweet fountains of joy and comfort which were opened to them, as they were God's creatures, not uncapable of his infinite mercy, prove floods of woe and misery to

them, as they are sworn servants of sin and corruption: for hate to filthiness and uncleanness is essentially and formally included in God's love of absolute goodness, righteousness, and true holiness; and the displeasure or indignation which he bears to these must needs seize on their persons that have covered themselves with them as with a garment, and to whose souls they stick more closely than their skins do to their bodies, or their flesh unto their bones.

CHAP. XX.

Whilst God, of a loving Father, becomes a severe Judge, there is no Change or Alteration at all in God, but only in Men and in their Actions. God's Will is always exactly fulfilled, even in such as go most against it. How it may stand with the Justice of God to punish Transgressions temporal with Torments everlasting.

1. THE sum of all is this: love was the mother of all his works, and (if I may so speak) the fertility of his power and essence; and seeing it is his nature as Creator, and cannot change, no part of our nature (seeing every part was created by him) can be utterly
96 excluded from all fruits of his love, until the sinister use of that contingency wherewith he endued it, or the improvement of inclinations naturally bent unto evil, come to that height, as to imply a contradiction for infinite justice or equity to vouchsafe them any favour. Whether natural inclinations unto evil may be thus far improved in the children by their forefathers or no, is disputable, but in another place. Concerning infants (save only so far as neglect of duties to be performed to them may concern their elders), seeing the scripture in this point is silent, I have no mind here or elsewhere to dispute. If faith

they have, or such holiness as becometh saints, neither are begotten by our writing or preaching, nor is the written word the rule of theirs as of all others' faith that are of years; and unto them only that can hear or read, or have the use of reason, I write and speak this, as well for their comfort and encouragement to follow goodness, or for their terror, lest they follow evil. Love, much greater than any creature owes or performs, or is capable of, either in respect of himself or in others, is the essential and sole fruit of God's antecedent will, whether concerning our nature as it was in the first man, or now is in the several persons derived from him; and of this love every particular faculty of soul or body is a pledge undoubted; all are as so many ties or handles to draw us unto him, from whom we are separated only by dissimilitude; our very natures being otherwise linked to his being with bonds of strictest reference or dependency. On the contrary, wrath and severity are the proper effects of his consequent will; that is, they are the infallible consequents of our neglecting and despising his will revealed for our good, or sweet promises of saving health. The full explication and necessary use of this distinction hath taken up its place in the articles of Creation, or Divine Providence. Thus much of it may serve our present turn: that God's absolute will was to have man capable of heaven and hell, of joys and miseries immortal: that this absolute will, whose possible objects are two, is in the first place set on man's eternal and everlasting joy more fervently than man can conceive, yet not so as to contradict itself by frustrating the contrary possibility which unto man it had appointed: that God's anger never kindles but out of the ashes of his flaming love despised, nor doth the turning of tender love and compassion into severity

and wrath presuppose or argue any change or turning in the Father of lights and everlasting mercy; it is wholly seated in men's irregular deviation from that course which by the appointment of his antecedent will they should and might have taken, whereto his fatherly kindness did still invite them, unto those crooked ways which they do but should not follow, from which the same infinite goodness doth still allure them by every temporal blessing, and deter them by every cross and plague that doth befall them.

2. This bodily sun which we see, never changeth with the moon; his light, his heat, are still the same; yet one and the same heat in the spring time refresheth our bodies here in this land, but scorcheth such as, brought up in this clime, journey in the sands of Afric. His beams, reflected on bodies solid, but of corruptible and changeable nature, often inflame matter capable of combustion, but, as some philosophers think, would not annoy us, unless by too much light, were we in that ethereal or celestial region wherein it moves; at least were our bodies of the like substance
97 with the heavens, the vicinity of it would rather comfort than torment us. Thus is the Father of lights a refreshing flame of unquenchable love to such as are drawn by love to be like him in purity of life, but a consuming fire to such as he beholdeth afar off, to such as run from him by making themselves most unlike unto him. No sons of Adam there be which in some measure or other had not some taste or participation of his bounty; and the measure of his wrath is but equal to the riches of his bounty despised. To whom this infinite treasure of his bounty hath been most liberally opened, it proves in the end a storehouse of wrath and torments, unless it finally draw them to repentance. According to the height of that exalta-

tion whereunto his antecedent will had designed them shall the degrees of their depression be in hell for not being exalted by it; nor doth any man in that lake of torments suffer pains more against his will, than he had done many things against the will of his righteous Judge daily leading him to repentance. The flames of hell take their scantling from the flames of God's love neglected; they may not, they cannot exceed the measure of this neglect: or, to knit up this point with evidence of sacred truth, God always proportioneth his plagues or punishments in just equality to men's sins; and the only rule for measuring sin or transgression right must be taken from the degrees of man's opposition to God's delight or pleasure in his salvation. Not so much as a dram of his delight or pleasure can be abated, not a scruple of his will but must finally be accomplished; the measure of his delight in man's repentance or salvation shall be exactly satisfied and fulfilled. Man's repentance he loves, as he is infinite in mercy and in bounty; man's punishment he doth not love at all in itself, yet doth he punish as he is infinitely just, or as he infinitely loveth justice. This is but the extract of Wisdom's speech, Prov. i. 24: *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. There-*

fore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

And it were to be wished that some modern divines would better explicate than they do a school tenet, held by many, concerning God's punishing sinners in the life to come *citra condignum*, that is, less than they deserve; for by how much their punishment is less than the rule of divine justice exacts, so much of that delight or good pleasure which God should have reaped from their salvation may seem by this remission to be diminished. But this point I leave to the judicious reader's consideration, who may inform himself from the expositors [t] of that sacred maxim, *His mercy is over all his works*, Ps. cxlv. 9.

98 3. To think God should punish sin, unless it were truly against his will, or any sin more deeply than it is against his will and pleasure, is one of those three gross transformations of the divine nature which St. Augustin refutes; for thus to do is neither incident to the divine nature, nor to any other imaginable. Most

[t] Quod in fine versus 9. dicitur, *Misericordia ejus super omnia opera ejus*, hoc, inquit Calv. neque absurdum, neque durum videri debet. Nam cum peccata nostra totum mundum involvant Dei maledictione, ubique locus est misericordiæ Dei ut brutis etiam animalibus subveniat. Hunc locum tractat Zanchius de Natura Dei, l. 4. c. 4. q. 4. Quam magna sit Dei misericordia, 1. Deus de justitia sua multum semper remittit. It. Reprobi cum postea puniuntur non pro meritis puniuntur, [Hæc Zanchii sententia] an igitur remittit illis propter satisfactionem Christi, an sine ulla satisfactione? [Verba Coppen.] Notandum hic in diabolis et reprobis condemnatis, post hanc vitam non videri quærenda misericordiæ divinæ vestigia. Coppen. in Psalm. cxlv. 9. videtur Zanchii expositio contradicere Jac. ii. 13. *Damnatio ἀνίλεως ei qui non præstitit misericordiam.*

of us are by nature choleric, and often take offence where none is given, and almost always greater than is justly given; but to be offended with any thing that goes not against their present wills is a waywardness of men whereof the human nature is uncapable. To punish any which do not contradict their wills is an injustice scarce incident to the inhabitants of hell. It is the mutability of our wills or multiplicity of humours which makes us so hard to be pleased. Our minds, at least our affections, are set upon one thing fasting, upon another full; on this to-day, on that to-morrow; on sweet meats in health, on sour in sickness; on kindness in mirth, on cruelty in anger: and because each hath his several inconstant motions, we cannot hold consort long together without crossing or thwarting. But no man ever offended by merrily consorting with his brother disposed to mirth, nor by consenting to wreak his will whilst he was in rage. No man ever punished his servant for doing that which for the present he would have him do; nor do the devils themselves vex the wicked (till God's justice overtake them), but the godly; because the one doth what they would, the other what they would not have him do; neither could displease them, were it not their wicked will to have all as bad and miserable as themselves. Could the damned by their suffering either ease those tormenters of pain or abate their malice, they would be less displeased at them, and, less displeased, torment them less. And whom then have they made the subject of their thoughts, or did they rather dream than think on God, that sometimes writ as if it were not as much against God's will to have men die, as it is against man's will to suffer death: for they suffer death, not because God delighteth in it, but that God's will may be fulfilled in their suffering

or passion, according to the measure it hath been neglected or opposed by their actions.

4. But though the rule of justice be exactly observed in proportioning their pains to the degrees or fervency of his love neglected, yet seeing the continuance of their neglect was but temporal, how stands it with his justice to make their pains eternal? The doubt were pertinent, if the immortal happiness whereunto the riches of God's bounty did daily lead them during their pilgrimage on earth, whereof they had sweet promises and full assurance, had not farther exceeded all the pleasures of this mortal life, for whose purchase they mortgaged their hopes of immortality, than the pains of hell do these grievances or corrections which caused them to murmur against their heavenly Father. In this sense we may maintain what Mirandula in another doth—that no man is everlastingly punished for temporal offences as committed against God. How then? Man wilfully exchanging his everlasting inheritance for momentary and transient pleasures, becomes the author of his own woe, and reaps the fruit of his rash bargains [u], and so makes up that measure of God's glory and pleasure by his eternal sufferings, which he might and would not do by eternal participation of his joyful presence. [x] And it is more than just, (for it is justice tempered with abundant mercy), that they should suffer everlasting
99 pains, who, not twice or thrice, or seven times only,

[u] Rom. viii. 18. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

[x] Quod si Christo salus nostra tam chara fuit, et tam charo constitit, quid est quare nostram ipsi salutem tantopere negligamus? Quibus suppliciis, et qua ignominia sempiterna non sumus digni, modicum laborem pro re obtinenda tam prætiosa recusantes? *Quomodo nos effugiemus* (inquit Paulus) *si tantum neglexerimus salutem?*—Acosta con. 3. de Circumcisione.

but more than seventy times seven times, have wilfully refused to accomplish God's eternal pleasure by accepting the sweet proffers of their eternal joy. In every moment of this life we have a pledge of his bounty to assure us of a better inheritance, the very first neglect whereof might in justice condemn us to everlasting bondage: the often and perpetual neglect turns flames of eternal love into an eternal consuming fire; for if love and mercy be his property as he is Creator and Preserver of all mankind, his love (as was said before) must needs be more indissolubly set on those attributes than on man. The end of his love to man is to make him happy by being like him in the love of goodness: now the more he loves him with reference to this end, or the oftener he pardons him for neglecting or refusing the means that draw unto it, the greater is his wrath against impenitency, or final contempt of his loving mercy. This is his most dear and tender attribute[y], which being foully wronged will not suffer justice to sleep.

Patientia læsa sit furor. Long restraint of anger upon just and frequent provocations makes the outbursting of it, though unseemly and violent, seem not altogether unjust or immoderate. Albeit the form and manner of proceeding which human patience much abused usually observes in taking revenge cannot in exact justice be warranted or approved, yet this excess of anger, or delinquency in the form, is so tempered with matter of equity, that it makes those actions of patient men much abused seem excusable which in others would be intolerable. The ideal perfection of this rule of equity, thus often corrupted by human

[y] Isa. xlii. 14. "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once."

passions, is in the divine nature without mixture of such passion or perturbation as is pictured out to the terror of the ungodly in the prophetical characters or descriptions of his anger: *Et excitatus est tanquam dormiens Dominus*, &c. *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine*, Psalm lxxviii. 65. Although he be a Father to all, and seem to wink at his sons' enormities, yet when he awakes he hath a curse in store for such as abuse his patience, and make a mock of his threatenings, more bitter than that which Noah bestowed on Cham. To attribute patience to him, and to deny him wrath and indignation, were in Lactantius' judgment to enrich his goodness by robbing his majesty: "The reasons of those philosophers are apparently vain which think that God cannot be angry; for even earthly empire or sovereignty forthwith dissolves, unless it be held together by fear. Take anger from a king, and instead of obedience he shall be thrown headlong from the height of dignity; yea, take anger from a man of meaner rank, and he shall become a prey to all, a laughingstock to all [z]."

5. I am not ignorant what censures pass upon this author for his incommodious speeches in this argument of God's wrath or anger. His words, I must confess, sound somewhat harsh to ears accustomed to the harmony of refined scholastic dialect. Yet Betuleius[a], a

[z] Ex his apparet vanas esse rationes philosophorum, qui Deum putant sine ira: et inter cæteras laudes ejus id ponunt, quod est contra ipsam majestatem. Regnum hoc imperiumque terrenum, nisi metus custodiat, solvitur. Aufer iram regi, non modo nemo parebit, sed etiam de fastigio præcipitabitur. Imo vero cuilibet humuli eripe hunc affectum, quis eum non spoliabit? quis non deridebit?—Lactantius cap. 23. de Ira Dei, pag. 477.

[a] Hactenus mihi magna contentio fuit cum Lactantio, dum humanis rationibus, divinam iram ex humana metiretur fragilitate. Jam autem, quia dicit iram Dei sicut ipsum etiam Deum, eter-

man too learned, and too well seen in Lactantius, to let 100
gross faults pass without espial, and too ingenuous to spare his censure upon errors espied, after long querulous debatements chides himself friends with his author, whose meaning in conclusion he acknowledgeth to be orthodoxal and good, albeit his characters of divine wrath in the premises may seem better to fit the fragility of human peevishness than the majesty of the Almighty Judge. His phrase, perhaps, might be excused in part by the security of those times wherein he wrote; his fault (if any fault it were, not to speak precisely in an age more precise for maintaining the elegancy or life of style, than the right use or logical propriety of words) is too common to most writers yet, and consisteth only in appropriating that to the divine nature which is attributed to it only by extrinsical denomination. But leaving his phrase (about which perhaps he himself would not have wrangled), his argument holds thus far true: God is more deeply displeased with sin than man is, though his displeasure be not clothed with such passions as man's anger is; and yet the motions of the creatures appointed to execute his wrath are more furious than any man's passions in extremest fury can be. What man's voice is like his thunder? what tyrant's frowns like to a lowering sky, breathing out storms of fire and brimstone? Yet are the most terrible sounds which the creatures can present but as so many echoes of his

nam, nihil habeo quod repugnem. Nam ex syncrisi divinæ atque humanæ iræ intelligo, ipsum de divina longe aliter quam de humana loqui: neque esse accidens quod in Deum non cadit, sed proprium, quia ira Dei a justitia Dei nihil differt. Justitia vero Dei ex eterna lege manat, contra quam si quis deliquerit, vindictam nimirum illius Dei sentiet, apud quem nullus vel temporum vel locorum terminus est.—Betuleius in Com. in cap. 21. Lactant. de Ira Dei.

angry voice; the most dreadful spectacles that heaven or earth, or the intermediate elements can afford, but copies of his ireful countenance: howbeit this change or alteration in the creature proceeds from him without any internal passion or alteration; *Immotus movet;* "He moveth all things, being himself immovable."

6. But as Lactantius may be so far justified, as we have said, so perhaps he is inexcusable in avouching anger to be as natural to God as mercy, love, and favour are. To him that duly considers his infinite goodness, it may seem impossible that he should be moved by us, or by any thing in us, to mercy; seeing, as St. Bernard [b] well observes, he hath the "seminary of mercy in himself, and cannot take the seeds of it from any other: the fruits of it we may by ill deserving so hinder, that they shall never take nor prosper in ourselves; but to punish or condemn us we in a sort constrain him." And though he be the author as well of punishment as of compassion, yet the manner how these two opposite attributes, in respect of us, proceed from him, is much different: the one is natural to him, and much better than any natural comfort unto us; the other is in a sort to him unnatural, and most unnatural and unpleasant unto us; for, as St. Jerome [c] saith, "God when he punisheth doth in a manner relinquish his nature; and therefore when he proceeds to punishment he is said to go out of his place, and to work, *alienum opus*, a strange or uncouth work." The wicked and reprobate, after this life, shall always see and feel his anger; but though

[b] Deus ex se sumit seminarium miserendi; quod judicat et condemnat nos, eum quodammodo cogimus ut longe aliter de corde ipsius miseratio quam animadversio procedere videatur.—Bernard. Ser. 5. in Natal. Dom. pag. 83. H.

[c] Vide Hierom. in cap. 1. Mich. vide Riberem in 1. Mich. num. 5. et in 4. Mal. num. 4.

they see him thus, immediately, they do not see his nature so immediately as the elect shall do, to whom he shews himself in love: this is his proper visage, the live character of his native countenance. The manifestation of his anger, in what part of the world soever, or in what manner soever made, is a veil or vizard put between him and the reprobate, lest they should see the light of his countenance and be made whole. Hence in the sentence of condemnation it shall be said, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* From his essential presence they cannot, but from the light of his countenance, or joyful presence, they must 101
of necessity depart: for were it possible for them to behold it, no torments could take hold of them; the reflex of it, upon whomsoever it lighteth, createth joy; the fruition of it is that happiness which we seek. To conclude: Lactantius rightly infers, "It were impossible sin should not be odious to him to whom goodness is pleasant and delightful." Now his displeasure at sin is the true cause of all displeasant motions or alterations in the creatures. His error, albeit we take him at the worst, was not great; and as it may easily be committed by others, so it may as quickly be rectified, if we say that anger and hate are by consequent, or upon supposal of sin, as necessary to the divine nature as love and mercy, but not so natural. But how either love or anger—both of them being either formally passions or indissolubly linked with passions—may be rightly conceived to be in God, is a point worth explication.

CHAP. XXI.

How Anger, Love, Compassion, Mercy, or other Affections are in the Divine Nature.

1. No affection or operation that essentially includes imperfection can properly be attributed to perfection itself; but if the imperfection be only accidental, that is, such as may be severed from the affection, the affection, after such separation made, may without metaphor (in some schoolmen's judgment) be ascribed to God. Hence the same schoolmen will have distributive justice to be in him, after a more peculiar manner than commutative justice is, because commutative justice (as they allege) essentially includes *rationem dati, et accepti;* somewhat mutually given and taken. Mercy likewise is (in their judgments) more properly in God than anger or revenge; because it may be abstracted from compassion, which is an imperfection annexed, but not essential to the relief of others' misery, wherein mercy (as they contend) formally consists. It sufficeth us, that such affections or moral qualities as in us formally and essentially include imperfection, may be contained in the Divine Essence; though not formally, yet eminently and most truly, as we suppose anger is. For in this point we rather approve of Lactantius' divinity[y], than of Seneca's philosophy[z]. He that bids us be angry and sin not, seeks not the utter extirpation, but the moderation of anger; *Qui ergo irasci nos jubet, ipse utique irascitur;* "He that bids us be angry, is doubtless upon just occasion angry himself." Nor should we

[y] De Ira Dei, cap. 21.

[z] Quotiens impetu opus est non irascitur, sed exurgit, et n quantum putavit opus esse concitatur remittiturque non aliter quam quæ tormentis exprimuntur tela, in potestate mittentis sunt, in quantum torqueantur.—Sen. lib. 1. de Ira, cap. 9. Ita aut ira non est, aut inutilis est.—Ibid.

sin, if we were angry only as he is angry; or at those things only that displease him, so far as they are displeasing to him; and were we as much inclined to mercy and lovingkindness as we are to anger, the motions of the one would argue as great passion as the motions of the other. But seeing[a] God's mercy which is proposed unto us for a pattern, is (if I may so speak) more real and truly affectionate in him than his anger, the difficulty how either should be in him is the same, or not much different: how can there be true compassion without passion, without motion or mutation? In many men it is observable, that the better use they have of reason, the less they participate of affection; and to carry those matters with moderation, which others can neither accomplish nor affect without excess 102
of passion or perturbation, is a perfection peculiar to good education, much and choice experience or true learning. And thus by proportion they argue, that God, who is infinitely wise, must be as utterly void of passion, though he be truly said merciful in respect of the event. The conclusion is truer than the reason assigned; and in most men whom the world accounteth wise or subtile, reason doth not so much moderate as devour affections of that rank we treat of. The cunningest heads have commonly most deceitful or unmerciful hearts; and want of passion often argues want of religion, if not abundance of habituated atheism or irreligion. Every man's passions are for the most part moderate in matters which he either least affects or minds the most. Perpetual minding, especially of worldly matters, coucheth the affections in an equal

[a] Dum ergo ad verba mutabilitatis nostræ descenditur, ex iis quibusdam gradibus factis ascendat qui potest ad incommutabilitatem Dei, ut videat sine zelo zelantem, sine ira irascentem, sine dolore et penitentia penitentem, sine misero corde misericordem, sine prævisionibus præscientem.—Greg. Moral. lib. 20. §. 63. in 30. cap. Job.

habit or constant temper, which is not easily moved, unless it be directly or strongly thwarted. Desires once stiffened with hope of advantage by close solicitation, secret carriage, or cunning contrivance, take small notice of violent oppositions which apparently either overshoot or come short of the game they lie in wait for. But even such moderate politicks, if their nets be once discovered and the prey caught from them, fall into Ahithophel's passion. Indignation and mercy, because incompatible with such means as serve best to politic ends, are held the companions of fools. And unto the world so they seem, because they are the proper passions of reason throughly apprehending the true worth of matters spiritual: for though gravity or good education may decently figure the outward motions, yet is it impossible not to be vehemently moved at the miscarriage of those things which we most esteem: and the wiser we are in matters spiritual, the higher we esteem the promulgation of religion, the good of God's church, and promotion of his glory: the better experience we have of his goodness, the more we pity their case which as yet never tasted it; the more compassionate we are to all that are in that misery whence we are redeemed. Did we esteem these or other duties of spiritual life as they deserve, the extremest fits of passion which any worldly wise man can be cast into, would seem but as light flashes to those flames of zeal and indignation which the very sight of this misguided world would forthwith kindle in our breasts. It is not then God's infinite wisdom which swallows up all passion, or exempts him from those affections, which essentially include perturbation; for so the most zealous and compassionate should be most unlike him in heavenly wisdom. But as the swift motion of the heaven better expresseth his immobility, or vigorous rest, than the dull stability of the

earth; so doth the vehemency of zeal, of indignation, or other passions of the godly, (so the motives be weighty and just,) exhibit a more lively resemblance of his immutability or want of passion, than the stoical apathy, or worldling's insensibility in matters spiritual can do.

2. How we should in godly passions be likest God, in whom is no passion, or how those virtues or affections which are formally in us should be eminently in him, cannot by my barren imagination be better illustrated, than by comparing the circle in some properties with other figures. A circle, in some men's definitive language, is but a circular line; and to any man's sense (as in some respects, perhaps, reason must acknowledge) it is rather one line than a comprehension of different lines, or a multitude of sides inclosed in angles: and from the unity of it perhaps it is, that many flexible bodies, as wands, or small rods of iron, brass, &c. 103 which presently break if you press them into angles, or seek to frame them into any other figure, will be drawn without danger into a circular form. Notwithstanding, some infallible mathematical rules there be expressed in terms which in strict property of speech (or univocally) agree only to figures consisting of sides and angles, whose truth and use reason experienceth to be most eminently true in the circle. Take a quadrangle ten yards in length and four in breadth; another, eight yards in length and six in breadth; a third, seven yards every way: the circumference of all three is equal twenty-eight yards: so is not the superficial quantity; but of the first, forty yards; of the second, forty-eight; of the third, forty-nine. The same induction alike sensible in other many-sided figures affords this general unquestionable rule: Among figures[b] of the same kind whose circumference is equal, that whose

[b] Inter figuras *ἰσοπεριμέτρας, ὁμογενέας*, ordinatior est capacior.

sides are most equal is most capacious. Yet frame a five-angled figure whose whole circumference is but twenty-eight yards, though the sides be not equal, the superficial quantity of it will be greater than the superficial quantity of the former square; and yet a six-angled figure of the same circumference, though the sides be unequal, will be more capacious than that. And still the more you increase the number of angles, though without any increase of the circumference, the greater will the capacity or superficial quantity of the figure be, specially if the sides be not unequal. From this evident induction ariseth a second tried rule in the mathematick: Amongst figures [c] of divers kinds, whose circumferences are equal, that which hath most angles is always most capacious. The circle, which to our sense seems neither to have sides nor angles, by a double title, grounded on both the former rules, hath the preeminence for capacity of all other figures. It is more uniform than any other, or rather the abstract or pattern of uniformity in figures, admitting neither difference of ranks or sorts, as triangles, quadrangles, or other many-sided figures do; nor of inequality between its own internal parts or lines: neither can one circle be more capacious than another of the same circumference: nor can any line in the same circle be longer than another that is drawn from one part of the circumference to another through the same centre. It is then in this respect more capacious than any other figure, because it is most uniform. The sides of other figures may be exactly equal, but the distance of every part of their circumference from the centre cannot admit such equality as every part of the circle's circumference doth. The circle again is more capacious than any other figure, because more full of angles: for

[c] Inter figuras *ἰσοπεριμέτρας* heterogeneas terminatior est capacior.

the angles which it nowhere hath univocally, formally, or conspicuous to sense, reason apprehends it to have every where eminently. For, as the philosopher tells us, it is ὁλογώνια, a totangle, and so hath the prerogative or royalty, though not the propriety of the second rule. It is more capacious than any other figure, not only because it is more ordinate or uniform, but withal because it hath more angles than any other figures can have, even as many as can be imagined, it being a totangle.

3. This analogy between sides and angles as they are found in the circle and in other figures, methinks well expresseth that analogy which school divines assign between wisdom, science, love, hatred, goodness, desire, &c. as they are found in God and in man. For no one name or title of any affection can be univocally attributed to the Creator and to the creature: and yet the rules of equity, of mercy, of justice, of patience, of 104
anger, of love, which we are commanded to follow, though not without passion or affection, are most truly observed by him; yea their truth in him is infinitely eminent: so far must we be from conceiting him to be without ardent love, without true and unfeigned goodwill to us, without wrath burning like fire to consume his adversaries, because he is without all passion. He is most loving, yet never moved with love, because he is eternally wholly love: he is most compassionate, yet never moved with compassion, because he is eternally wholly compassion: he is most jealous of his glory, and a revenger of iniquity most severe; yet never moved with jealousy, yet never passionate in revenge; because, to such as provoke his punitive justice, he is eternally severity and revenge itself. Again, how the indivisible essence should be wholly love and wholly displeasure, wholly mercy and wholly

severity, I cannot better illustrate than by the circle, the true emblem of his eternity, which is as truly ὁλόπλευρος as ὁλογώνια, as well all sides as all angles: and being such, the sides and angles cannot be distinguished in it; but the sides are angles, and the angles sides; at least they are, if not essentially, yet penetratively the same. The circle likewise is as truly ἰσόπλευρος and ἰσογώνιος, of equal sides and equal angles, as ὁλόπλευρος and ὁλογώνιος, a totangle or totilater; and did it not contain multiplicity of sides as well as of angles in most exact and eminent uniformity, it could not have the full prerogative of the former rules. Nor could the indivisible Essence either be so great or excellent in himself, or a moderator of all things so powerful and just, as we believe he is, unless he did eminently contain the perfections of all things possible as well as of any one.

4. Some philosophers have placed the human nature as a line diameter or equilibrium in this visible sphere, making man the measure of all things, as participating all other natures; muchwhat after the same manner that mixed bodies contain the force and virtues of the elements. And man's nature, till it was corrupt, did (without doubt) include such an eminent uniformity to all things created as the eye doth unto colours. As he was then the true image of God for his essence, so did he in this property bear a true shadow of the divine prerogative, whose essence, though for number or greatness of perfections contained in it altogether measureless, is the most true and exquisite measure of all things that are, or possibly can be: all the conditions or properties of measure assigned by the philosopher are as truly contained in the incomprehensible essence, as sides or angles in the circle, but far more eminently. A measure it is, not appliable to mea-

surables, for kind or quantity much different, according to diversity of parts, which it hath none, for it is immutably, eternally, and indivisibly the same; and unto it the nature, essence, quality, and quantity of all things are actually applied, in that they have actual being. It is impossible the immutable Creator should be fitted to any thing created; but in that he is immutable, and yet eminently containeth all things in his indivisible essence, he eternally and immutably fits all the possible varieties whereof contingency itself is capable. Being all things else, he is fitness itself in a most eminent and excellent manner; the present disposition of every thing, either whiles it first begins to be, or continues the same, or whiles it is in the change or motion, (whether from good to evil, or from evil to good, from evil to worse, or from good to better,) is 105
more exquisitely fitted in its own kind, by eternal, immutable, and incomparable fitness, than it could be by any other measure which the Creator himself could create with it, or devise for it, after the alteration or change were accomplished. In that he is indivisibly *one*, and yet eminently *all*, he is immutable, contrariety itself unto contraries; arithmetical equality itself to things equal; geometrically equal to things unequal according to every degree of their unequal capacities in what sort soever. And as of his other attributes one truly and really is another, so in respect of man, his measure[d] is his judgment or retribution whether of rewards or punishments, not the rule only by which he rewards or punisheth. Unto man in his first creation, and whiles he continued as he created him, he was and would have continued bounty itself; unto man yet, as he is his creature, he is love itself; and unto man made by his own folly an impotent, wretched, and

[d] See Isa. lxvi. 14—16. Ezek. vii. 4. Deut. vii. 9, 10.

miserable creature, he is so entirely mercy and compassion itself, that were there a distinct god of love or a goddess of mercy, or two infinite living abstracts of mere love and mere mercy, they could not be so loving and merciful unto man touched with the sense of his own miseries, nor solicit him so seriously and perpetually unto repentance as he doth, who is entirely infinite mercy, but not mercy only. Unto the truly penitent he is so truly and entirely graciousness itself, that if there were a trinity of such abstract graces as the poets have feigned, they could be but a figure or picture of his solid and infinite graciousness. Unto the elect and throughly sanctified, he is so truly and entirely felicity and salvation itself, that if the heathen goddesses Felicitas and Salus, or Plato's Idea of true happiness might be inspired with life and sense, they could not communicate half that happiness to any one man (though they would choose his heart for their closet, or actuate his reasonable soul as it doth the sensitive) that is imparted by him to all his chosen, who is entirely infinite happiness, but not happiness only [e]. For unto the impenitent, and despisers of his bounty, of his love, his mercy, grace, and salvation, he is justice, indignation, and severity itself. Nemesis herself, were she enabled with spirit, life, and power much greater than the heathens ascribed unto her, and permitted to rage without control of any superior law, should not be able, with all the assistance the Furies could afford her, to render vengeance unto Satan and his wicked angels in such full and exquisite measure as the just Judge will do in that last dreadful day. Then shall he truly appear to be, as our apostle speaks,

[e] Qui quotidie contemnit Deum, etiam quotidie judicatur, non manifesto sed occulto judicio, non aperto sed tamen certo : occultiora sæpe sunt certiora manifestioribus.—Coppen. in Psal. vii. 12. Etiam Dei *μακροθυμία* est ipsius *δικαιοκρισία*.—Coppen. ib.

All in all, the infinite abstract of all those powers which the heathens adored for gods, as authors either of good or of evil; then shall he fully appear to be mercy, goodness, grace, and felicity, *Nemesis*, *pavor*, and terror itself; the indivisible and incomprehensible Idea of all things which in this life our love did seek after, or our fear naturally laboured to avoid. The only loadstone whereto our love, our desire, in our creation, were directed, was his goodness and lovingkindness; and fear was implanted in our nature, as an helm or rudder, to divert us from his immutable justice or indignation, which are as rocks immovable, against which whosoever shall carelessly or presumptuously run must everlastingly perish without redemption.

A TREATISE

OF THE

DIVINE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES.

BOOK VI. PART II.

SECTION I.

Of the Attribute of Omnipotency and Creative Power.

CHAP. I.

The Title of Almighty is not personal to the Father, but essential to the Godhead.

IN further explication of this article, it is added in the Nicene Creed, "I believe in one God the Father Almighty." This title of Almighty, or Omnipotency, is not given to the Son or to the Holy Ghost, nor are either of them expressly enstyled by the name of God in the Creed. The omission of the title of God, and of the attribute Almighty, (which is proper to the Godhead,) when the persons of the Son and of the Holy Ghost with their several offices are described,
110 may administer this scruple to men not much conversant in these great mysteries—"Whether the Father only be God, or only Almighty, or the only God Almighty, in such sort as the Son and Holy Ghost are not?" To say the Father only is God, or the Father

only is Almighty, were to wrong the Son and Holy Ghost; to both whose persons these titles are due, and our faith in this point of the Trinity, above all others, must be uniform and unpartial, without respect of Persons; and for the better instruction of such as did not fully apprehend the right meaning of the apostolic creed, this uniformity of our faith is expressly taught by Athanasius: "Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost: the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God: the Father is Almighty, the Son is Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty." Yet shall we often read in scriptures, and in writers orthodoxal, even in Athanasius himself, "that the Father is the only God." So saith the Son of God, John xvii. 3, *This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Doth Christ therefore deny himself to be the only true God? or rather, is it a part of our belief, and of our Saviour's meaning in that place, that we must know, not only God the Father, but Jesus Christ also, whom he hath sent, to be the only true God? And though it be not in that place expressed, yet it is necessarily implied in other scriptures, that the Holy Ghost is the only true God. No Christian may question this proposition, *Pater est solus Deus*, "The Father is the only God;" nor this, *Filius est solus Deus*, "The Son is the only God;" nor this third, *Spiritus Sanctus est solus Deus*, "The Holy Ghost is the only God." The Father likewise is the only Almighty, the Son likewise is the only Almighty, and the Holy Ghost the only Almighty; on whom our faith is jointly and uniformly set. This uniformity of our faith hath for its object the unity of nature in the Trinity. But to say, *Solus Pater est Deus, solus Pater est Omnipotens*, "The Father only

is God, or the Father only is Almighty; the Son only is God, or the Son only is Almighty; the Holy Ghost only is Almighty," were more than heresy, gross infidelity. For every one of these speeches includes a denial both of the coequality of their persons and of the unity of their nature. Of the ground of this distinction, or of the difference between these several propositions, *Solus Pater est Deus, Pater est solus Deus,* "The Father only is God," and "The Father is the only God," &c. by the assistance of this blessed Trinity we shall discuss, after we have proved the Son to be truly God, and the Holy Ghost likewise to be truly God, in the several articles which concern their persons and offices. Now the same arguments which prove the Son to be truly God and the Holy Ghost likewise to be truly God, will likewise prove the Son to be the only God, the only Almighty. The point next in view, and first to be handled, is the meaning of this attribute Almighty, and how it agrees to the Godhead or Divine Nature as it is presupposed one and the same in the Three Persons.

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CHAP. II.

Of Omnipotency, and of its Object: Of Possibility and of Impossibility.

1. Οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ῥῆμα: *Nothing shall be unpossible unto God,* saith the angel to the blessed Virgin, doubting or moving this question, *How shall I* (instantly) *conceive and bear a son, seeing I know not a man?* That the accomplishing of that which the angel had said was possible to God, the event did prove; but that nothing should be impossible unto God, can neither be proved by any event, nor will it necessarily follow, at least the necessity of its consequence is not so clear from the words uttered by the

angel, which admit of some restriction. For to be God, or to be equal with God, is something, more than mere nothing. Is it then possible for God to make a God every way equal unto himself? The Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the blessed Virgin, was equal with God, yet not so made, but so begotten from all eternity; he is more than ῥῆμα, ὁ λόγος, and is not comprehended under the former proposition; for being God from all eternity, it was impossible he should be made. Must then the angel's speech or the article of omnipotency be restrained to things possible? or is God said to be omnipotent only in this respect, that he is able to do all things that are possible to be done? In respect of whom then shall they be counted possible? in respect of God himself, or in respect of men or angels? or with reference to angelical or human knowledge only? or in respect of knowledge divine? To be able only to do all things that man or angels can do, or can conceive may be done, doth not exequate or fill our conceit of power and wisdom truly infinite; it is much less than the full extent or contents of omnipotency, which certainly containeth power and wisdom much greater than can be comprehended by man or angel. Again, to say that God can do all things that are possible for him to do, or may be effected by his infinite power and wisdom, is to say the same thing twice, and yet to leave the true notion of omnipotency unexpressed.

Were the question propounded, What things can be seen or heard; what things cannot be seen or heard? a man should be little wiser by this answer, "Things visible only can be seen, things invisible cannot be seen; things audible only can be heard, things inaudible cannot be heard." For if one which knows no Latin, nor the derivation of English words from it,

should further ask, what it is to be visible, what it is to be invisible; or what is the meaning or signification of audible and inaudible? the answer would be, "That is visible which can be seen, that is invisible which cannot be seen; that is audible which may be heard, that inaudible which cannot be heard." So that he which formerly knew the signification of these words, or their form in Latin (whence they are derived), should learn nothing by this answer, which for real sense is but *idem per idem*, a diversity of words, without any difference in the thing signified by them. Again, though these two propositions be convertible, 1. Every object of sight is visible, and whatsoever is visible is the object of sight; 2. Every object of hearing is audible, and whatsoever is audible is the object of hearing; yet is not visibility the true and proper object of sight, nor audibility of hearing. To be
112 visible or invisible, to be audible or inaudible, are terms relative; and every relation or relative term supposeth a ground or root, whence it ariseth or results, which in nature hath precedency of it: now it is the root or ground from which the relation results, which is the proper object of every faculty, whether it be passive as our senses are, or active as our understanding is.

2. This relation or relative term, to be visible or audible, results from the impression which the proper objects of sight or hearing make upon these two senses, or at least from the aptitude which they have to imprint their proper shape or form upon these senses. The object of sight, which is colour or light, cannot found the relation of audibility, because neither light nor colour have any aptitude to imprint their form upon the ear; nor can the relation of visibility result from sounds, which are the proper object of hearing,

because sounds have no aptness or power to make any sensitive impression upon the eye. Sounds then are the proper object of hearing, and the ground or root whence bodies take the denomination of being audible. Light or colour is the proper object of sight, and the ground or root whence bodies in which light or colour is found, receive the relative denomination of being visible. Unto the question then, "What things may be seen, what things may not be seen; what things may be heard, or may not be heard?" the true and only philosophical answer is, "Those things only can be seen which are endowed with colours, or participate of light; those things which have no colour or participation of light cannot be seen: those bodies only which are apt to make or give sound, can be heard; those which can yield no sound, cannot be heard." If it should further be demanded why sounds only are audible, whenas neither colours nor other qualities can be audible, or become the object of hearing? the only way to assoil this question would be to instruct him that makes it in the manner how sounds are produced, how they are carried by the air unto the ear, how they are there entertained by the air, which the ear or organ of hearing continually harbours within itself for their entertainment. He that should see the fabric of the ear, and take the use of its several parts (of the anvil and the hammer especially) into serious consideration, would cease to inquire why sounds are audible rather than colours, and begin to admire the inexpressible skill of the Artificer, which framed this live-echo in all more perfect sensitive creatures. No marvel if the ear perceive sounds, seeing the use or exercise of this sense is a continual imitation of the production of sounds; and as no creature understands the expressions of our rational internal notions, save

that only which is endowed with the like internal notions of reason; so neither could the ear or sense of hearing perceive sounds, unless it had a continual internal sound within itself. He again that should view the several humours of the eye, the crystalline especially, would never move question, why colours should make that impression upon the eye which they do not upon the ear.

3. The point questioned in this part of divinity, or concerning the meaning of this attribute, omnipotency, comes to this issue: whether power infinite and om-
113 nipotent have any object whereunto it is or may be so immediately terminated, as sight or the visive faculty is unto light or colours, or as the faculty of hearing is to sounds, whence the relation or relative denomination of possibility doth so result, as visibility doth from the sight or visive faculty, as it respecteth colours. If infinite power presuppose any other object preexistent to possibility, as light and colours are to visibility, this object must needs be either privative or positive; something or mere nothing. If we shall say this object is a positive entity, either it was from eternity without dependence on his almighty power, and so it should be, as that power is, infinite. Or if we say this supposed object were from him, or by him, or had dependence on his power, then certainly it was possible, and therefore cannot be precedent to all possibility: whence it may seem concluded that God's infinite power or omnipotency is the only foundation of possibility, and by consequence cannot possibly have any object, whereto it is or can be terminated, or so fitted, as the visive faculty or sight is to light or colours. Howbeit in truth the former reasons only conclude that the object of omnipotency can be no positive entity, nor the privation or negation of any

determinate being. But that the same omnipotent power may have an object purely negative, or including a total negation of all things numerable, though their number were potentially infinite, the former reasons or the like cannot enforce us to deny. All things are said to be possible unto God, because by his omnipotent power he can make all things, not out of positive possibilities or entities possible, but of mere nothing, that is, without any positive entity preexistent to serve either as matter, agent, or instrument. What? shall we say then that things not possible only, but impossible, may be done or made by power omnipotent? or may we say that impossibility is either something, or at least (as some have taught) a degree or part of *non esse*, or of nothing? But how can that which is not, have any degrees or parts? or, admit we might conceive things impossible, or impossibilities, to be degrees or parts of nothing, yet, so conceived, we must needs conceive them to have the same negative conditions or properties which are attributed to *non esse*, to simple not being, or to nothing; that is, they might be such objects of infinite power, as *non esse*, or not being, is. Yet he that made all things that are, of nothing, and can resolve them into nothing again, doth never attempt or proffer to resolve them into impossibilities, nor did he make any thing of impossibles. Whether then impossibility or impossibles be something or nothing, how is it possible they should so resist the power omnipotent, which can do all things, as that nothing can be made of them? Lastly, if impossibilities can be no objects of God's power, then things possible, or possibilities, must be the only object of it; and so we shall fall into the former circle, that God can do those things only that are possible, and those things only are possible which God can do.

4. Here the schools acutely distinguish between possibility relative and absolute[f]. Possibility relative
114 being the first draught or capacity of all being or perfection limited, must needs be founded upon omnipotency; nothing is relatively possible, but by reference to or by denomination from this almighty power. Absolute possibility they conceive *ad modum objecti*, as it were an object that doth terminate omnipotent power, not positively, as colours do sight, but privatively, as darkness doth sight; or as an empty sphere, without which omnipotency itself doth never work. This absolute possibility, or possibility merely logical, which is presupposed to relative possibility, as light or colour is to visibility, cannot otherwise be notified or expressed than by this negative, of not implying contradiction. But here the former difficulty concerning impossibilities meets with us in another shape. For it will be again demanded, whether contradiction be any thing or nothing? or how it should come to oppose God's almighty power more than either *non esse*, simple not

[f] Certe non est perfectus et pulcher mundus, nisi omne quod sit pulchrum, sit aliqua bonitas quæ velit; et omne quod scibile, sit sapientia quæ sciat; et quod possibile, potentia quæ possit. Nam qua aliquid possibile non potuit, aut scibile ignoravit, aut pulchrum noluit vel invidit, mancum et imperfectum exierit opificium: ipsum vero pulchrum, aut scibile, nemo definit ad bonitatem volentis, aut scientiam scientis. Sed pulchrum est, quod rei cui accidit ad propriam bonitatem obtinendam, perfectionem adjicit; et scibile, quod in sese habet principium, unde sciri possit: igitur neque possibile, quod simpliciter dicitur et non ad aliquid definiri debet ad potentiam: sed simpliciter possibile, est illud quo facto et posito, nulla repugnantia fit, aut contradictio. Tunc enim res per sese fuerit impossibilis, cum in ipsa est (ut ita dicamus) impossibilitas. Externum vero quiddam fuerit, si ob id solum dicatur impossibilis, quod non sit causa quæ possit facere. Oportet igitur sit in rebus causa aliqua, quæ possit, quidquid in sese repugnantiam nullam continet. At vero fieri ex nihilo non est simpliciter impossibile, sed impossibile cuidam virtuti finitæ, puta naturali; qua virtute esse aliam superiorem, et potentiorem, non est impossibile. —Vallesius de sacr. Philosoph. p. 20.

being, or all things that are possibly can do? Can it be less than nothing? That is impossible; rather it is, if not so much more, yet so much worse than nothing, as that it cannot possibly bear the true form or character of any thing, and for this reason can be no object of power omnipotent. Under that notion which we have of omnipotency, or infinite being, truth itself, and unity itself, or identity, are as essentially included as entity, or being itself. It is no impotency in God, but rather the prerogative of his omnipotency, that he cannot weaken his power by division, nor admit any mixture of imbecility, that he cannot deny or contradict himself. In that he is infinitely true, or infinite truth itself, the ratification or approbation of contradictions is more incompatible with his nature or essence, than falsehood is with truth, than weakness with power, than malice with goodness. There is no falsehood, unless it include some degrees or seeds of contradiction; as all truth is the offspring of unity or identity. In conclusion, as all things which are, or possibly may be, can be no more than participations of his being who is being itself, so they must, by an eternal law, whensoever they begin to be, bear a true though an imperfect resemblance of his unity, of his identity, of his veracity, as well as of his power, which is omnipotently true, omnipotently just.

5. In answer to the last difficulty proposed, it must be said that impossibility is neither any positive entity, nor is it any part or branch of *non esse*, or of nothing. For in respect of him who is all, more than all things, there can be no absolute *non esse: He calleth things that are not as if they were;* that is, he can by his sole word make all things which yet are not, which yet have not been, to have true being; he can make any thing of nothing. That then which we call im-

possibility, must not be derived from *non esse*, but from falsehood, which is finally resolved into contradiction; so that the rule of contradiction is the test by which impossibilities as well as falsehood must be discovered; and it is more to be impossible than to be false. From what fountain then doth impossibility spring? from absolute and omnipotent power, or from the infinity of the divine nature? But seeing in him all power and being is contained, seeing the very possibility of limited being takes its beginning from him, the possibility of weakening his power, the possibility of contradicting or opposing himself, must by the eternal law be excluded from the object of omnipotency. As we say two negatives make an affirmative, so, to be unable to disenable itself is no imperfection, no impotency, but the greatest perfection, the highest
115 degree of power whereof any nature is capable, because the impossibility of disenabling or weakening himself is a positive branch of the prerogative of omnipotency. 2. It is not so true an argument of power in men to be illimited by law, or to be able to do what they list, as to be willing to do nothing but that which is lawful and just; unless man's will be a law to his power, and goodness a law unto his will, how absolute and illimited soever his power may be in respect of other men, or of any coactive law which they can make to restrain it, it may quickly come to make an end of itself; and the end or cessation of power absolute is the worst kind of limit that can be set unto it.

The power of the Persian kings was sometimes so absolute and so illimited, that Cambyses, having no positive law to curb his will, fell in love with his own sister; and yet so natural is the notion of man's subjection unto some law, even unto men of corrupt minds, that this lawless king consulted his judges

whether his desire to enjoy the love of his sister might be countenanced by law. The effect of these sages' answer was, that they knew no law in special which might warrant the brother to marry the sister, but they had found a transcendent law by which the kings of Persia might do what they list. By the like prerogative of this transcendent law, another king, upon her request, did delegate his absolute power unto his queen for a day; and she by delegation of this power, having liberty to do what she list, did use it to the destruction of him that gave it her; for she cut off his head before she surrendered it. It is, then, a branch of the Almighty's prerogative, that his omnipotent power cannot for a moment be delegated or bequeathed to any other; that as he can do whatsoever he will, so nothing can be done or willed by him which may derogate from the endless exercise of his infinite majesty, power, truth, or goodness.

The use of this doctrine concerning the prerogative of omnipotency, and the absolute impossibility of doing any thing that may derogate from it, is in general this: As no opinion, in the judgment of philosophers, can be convinced of absurdity until it be resolved into a contradiction either unto itself or unto some principle of nature from which it pretends some original title of truth, so the only rule for the discovering impiety of opinions in divinity, or for convincing their authors of heresy or infidelity, is by manifesting their repugnancy or contradiction to some one or other divine attribute, or to some special promise or asseveration made by the Almighty in scriptures; and whosoever denies or contradicts any part of God's word doth contradict the divine truth or veracity, which no man hath any temptation either to deny or contradict but from some doubt or denial of his omnipotency.

Of such opinions as either contradict this article of omnipotency, or falsely pretend some colourable title of truth from it, we shall have occasion to speak in the particular articles against which these errors are conceived, or whose truth they prejudice. Having hitherto declared the object and meaning of this article, we are in the next place to prove the truth of it against the atheist.

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CHAP. III.

This visible World did witness the invisible Power and Unity of the Godhead unto the ancient Heathens.

1. LEST any man should misconceive the former title of Almighty to be but as a fair promising frontispiece to an unresponsible work, we have the fabric of this universe, the whole world itself, and all things in it, produced as witnesses of the Almighty Father's allsufficiency for effecting whatsoever either this grand attribute of omnipotency or any other article of this Creed may promise or intimate unto us; for when we profess our belief that there is "a Father Almighty, who made the heaven and earth," we must believe, not only that he made both, but that he which so made them both is both able and willing to effect all things for us, for which we have his promise; even things which neither eye hath seen nor ear hath heard, things which cannot possibly enter into the heart of man by any bodily sense. To this purpose the Nicene Creed expresseth this article more fully, "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." He that hath already made many things to us invisible can prepare those things for us which neither eye hath seen nor ear hath heard. The inspection of this great visible

sphere did convince the understandings of such as had no other book besides this great book of nature to instruct them, the understandings of men altogether unacquainted with Moses' writings, that the author of this great book was the only God, the only invisible Power which deserved this sovereign title; for though it be probable that Plato had read Moses' history and his law, there is no probability that either Orpheus or Pythagoras (both far more ancient than Plato) had read or seen them, or could understand the language wherein they were in their times only extant; yet Justin Martyr[g], one of the most ancient Christian writers, produceth the testimony of Pythagoras (an heathen philosopher against the heathen) as a second to Orpheus for confirmation of that truth which we Christians in this article believe:

> Εἴ τις ἐρεῖ Θεός εἰμι, πάρεξ ἑνὸς, οὗτος ὀφείχει
> Κόσμον ἴσον τούτῳ στήσας εἰπεῖν, ἐμὸς οὗτος.
>
> Let him that says, 'I am a god,' win homage by his deed,
> And lay a world like this to pawn before I give him creed.

2. Now, albeit neither Orpheus nor Pythagoras were canonical writers, though their joint authority be not infallible, yet the Holy Ghost, a teacher most infallible, hath declared the reasons which they used to be most infallible by the testimony of two canonical writers: the first is that of the psalmist, Psalm xcvi. 4, 5, *The Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols* (*or gods no gods*): *but the Lord made the heavens.* The prophet Jeremy is more express and more peremptory, chap. x. 10, 11, 12, *But the Lord is the true God, he is the living*

[g] Justin. Mart. De Monarchia Dei.

God, and an everlasting King: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to
117 *abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.*

3. The consonancy between the live oracles of God and the dictates of reason in heathen men afford us this aphorism, that it is not nature herself, (which is never otherwise than negatively, or at the most privatively opposed to the goodness of God,) but the corruption of nature, which is always contrary to the good Spirit of God, whereby men are seduced unto atheism; and seeing this corruption of nature, whereof atheism is the symptom, is the only disease of the soul, the disease and the symptom cannot more kindly be cured than by reviving the strength of nature. The receipt for reviving and strengthening nature must be compounded of these two truths, both evident by light of reason, not eclipsed by interposition of corrupt affections or malignant habits, or freed from these by illumination of the Spirit. The first truth is, that this visible world did not make itself, but had a Maker, which gave it beginning and continuation of being; the second, that the making of this visible world doth evince the Maker of it to be omnipotent, and able to effect whatsoever he hath promised. But before the former truth can have its operation upon the human soul which is misaffected, the objections of the atheists must be removed; all his objections may be reduced to these two—*Ex nihilo nihil fit*, "Of nothing nothing can be made;" whence seeing we acknowledge creation

The two main principles contained in the article of Creation.

either to be a making of all things of nothing, or (at least) to suppose that some things are made of mere nothing, the truth which we Christians in this article believe may seem directly to contradict a philosophical truth or principle in nature. This first objection is seconded by another; 'To create, or to make something, of nothing, is to be active:' or thus; 'Creation supposeth an agent, and every agent presupposeth a patient.' Now if there were any patient, or passive power, pre-existent to the act of creation, this passive power or patient, wherein it lodgeth, was not created, but must have a being from eternity. From the difficulty included in this last objection some philosophers did conceive an unfashioned or confused mass, coequal to the eternity of divine power, which they acknowledge to be the artificer or framer of this great work into that uniformity or beauty of several forms which now it bears. The first objection admits a double sense or double construction, and hath no truth in respect of the Almighty Maker, save only in the impertinent sense; the second objection, universally taken, is false.

CHAP. IV.

The first Objection of the Atheist, 'Of Nothing, Nothing can be made.' Of the doubtful Sense of this Natural, how far it is true, and how far it is false.

1. When it is said by the naturalist that 'nothing can be made of nothing,' or that 'every thing which is made is made of something,' this particle *ex* or *of* hath not always the same importance; and in the multiplicity of its significations or importances the 118
naturalist either hoodwinks himself or takes opportunity to hide his error, or at least makes advantage of

the doubtful phrase against such as seek to refel him. When we speak of natural bodies or sublunary substances, this particle *of* usually denotes the proper and immediate matter whereof every such body is made: thus we say the elements are mutually made one *of* another, or *of* the matter which is common to them all; mixed bodies are made *of* the elements wrought or compacted into one mass; vegetables and living substances endued with sense are made *of* mixed bodies, as of their immediate and proper matter. Sometimes the same particle *of*, or that speech, 'This body is made *of* that,' doth not denote the immediate and proper matter whereof it is made, but yet imports that that part of the bodily substance which was in the one becomes an ingredient in the other which is made of it: so of water wine was made by miracle, (John ii.) yet not made of water as of its immediate or proper matter, not so as vapours are made of moisture, or distilled waters of fume or smoke; for so, that great work had been no true miracle, had included no creation, but a generation only. Now it is impossible unto nature to generate wine of water, without the ingredient of any other element; it cannot be made by generation otherwise than of the juice or sap of the vine, which is not a simple element, but the expression of a body perfectly mixed. Howbeit in this miraculous conversion of water into wine, some part of the corporeal substance of water did remain as an ingredient in the wine; there was not an utter annihilation of the water, and a new production of wine in the same place where water had been, but a true and miraculous transubstantiation of water into wine. And thus we must grant that trees and vegetables were on the third day made, not immediately

of nothing[h]; that fishes and beasts were made, the one of the bodily substance of the earth, and the other of the bodily substance of the waters, neither immediately made of nothing, albeit both were made, not by generation, but by creation; that is, not of any bodily matter, naturally disposed to bring forth or receive that form which by the Creator's hand was enstamped upon them; for in true philosophy that which philosophers call *the matter* of all things generable was not the first sublunary substance which was produced, nor was it comproduced or concreated with them, but created in them after they were made. God had gathered the waters into one place and the dry land into another, before either of them had power to conceive or become the common mothers of vegetable and living things; *Thus were the heaven and the earth first made, and the waters divided by the firmament;* whereas the earth did not become the matter or common mother of things vegetable before the third day, wherein God said, *Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.* Gen. i. 11. Nor did the waters become the common matter or mother of fishes before the fifth day: *Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life,* &c.[i] Now this production of herbs or plants out of the

[h] De verbo, creare, ego ita censeo, creare duplex esse, alterum et præcipuum, ex nihilo facere: alterum sine materiæ dispositione facere. Nam substantia non videtur aliter fieri posse, quam generatione, aut creatione. Generatio vero non est nisi in materia disposita: quæ igitur sine materiæ dispositione est, creatio vocari debet. Quapropter sive ex nihilo omnia, sive ex nihilo quædam, quædam ex materia non disposita, sed jubendo fecit; omnium est Deus effector et Creator.—Vallesius, c. 2. p. 22.

[i] Of this argument, see Erastus in the beginning of his first tome against Paracelsus.

earth, of fish and fowl out of the substance of the water, was not a mere conservation or actuation of
119 that power which the earth and waters had before, but the creation of a new power in them, the continuation of which power is part of that which we call the passive power of the matter. Nor had the fishes or whales, which God created, this passive power in themselves from their first creation, but received it from that blessing of God, (ver. 22,) *Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.* Nor did the earth become the common mother of vegetables, as of herbs, grass, trees, &c., and of more perfect living creatures, at the same time: it received power to bring forth the one upon the third day, not enabled to bring forth the other until the fifth day: God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth.* So that all these, and man himself, were not immediately made of nothing, though immediately made by God himself; for they were made by him of the substance of the earth, which was visible and preexistent to their making, though not made of it as of the matter. But when it is said, in the first of Genesis, *God in the beginning made the heaven and earth,* it cannot be supposed or imported that he made them of any visible or invisible substance preexistent; and if he made them or their common mass of no substance preexistent, here was something made of nothing: but how of nothing? or what doth this particle import? Not that nothing should remain as an ingredient in the first mass, or as if it had the like precedency to it as the earth had to living things: the Almighty did not so turn nothing into something as our Saviour did water into wine. To say any thing could be made of no-

thing in this sense, or according to the former importances of the particle *of*, doth indeed imply an evident contradiction; for so nothing should be something, and simple not being should have a true being. To make nothing to be something, falls not within the object of power omnipotent; it can be no part of the Almighty Maker's work. As ciphers cannot be multiplied into numbers by any skill in arithmetic, though supposed infinite, so neither can nothing be converted into something, nor become an ingredient in bodies created by any power, though infinite. As the Omnipotent Creator is one unity itself, so every thing which he makes must have its unity or identity; it cannot consist of contradictories.

2. When then it is said, that all things were made of nothing, or that creation supposeth some things to be immediately made of nothing, this particle *of* can only import *terminum a quo*, the term only of the action, not any matter or subject; and yet the term thus imported can be no positive entity, but a mere negation of any positive entity precedent. To make the heavens and earth of nothing, is in real value no more, than to make them not of any matter or entity preexistent, whether visible or invisible, on which their Maker did exercise his efficient power or efficacy; but to give them such being, as they then first began to have, that is, a corporeal being or existence, by the mere efficacy or virtue of his word. As, suppose the sun should in a moment be suffered to transmit his light into a close vault of stone; we might truly say this heavenly body did make light of darkness, *tanquam ex termino*, in that it made light to be there where was no light at all before, but mere darkness. And thus to make light out of darkness doth no way argue that it turned darkness into light, or that darkness did

120 remain as an ingredient in the light made. After this manner did the Almighty make the heaven and earth of nothing, that is, he made the corporeal mass or substance, out of which all things visible were made, where no limited substance, whether visible or invisible, was before; and by the same efficiency by which this mass was made, he made place or spaciousness quantitative, which had no being at all before; he did not turn indivisibility into spaciousness, or mere vacuity into fulness; fulness and spaciousness were the resultance of that mass which was first made, without any entity or ingredient preexistent. To make something of nothing in this sense implies no contradiction; there is no impossibility that the heaven and earth should be thus made; but this will not suffice to refute the atheist or infidel. For many things are possible which are not probable, and many things probable which are not necessary. The next question then is, what necessity there is in the infallible rules of nature and reason, that the heavens and the earth should be made of nothing. Against the probability only of Moses' history of the first creation, the atheist will yet oppose this general induction, 'That all bodily substances that begin to be what before they were not, that all things which we see made, are always made by some efficient cause, not out of mere nothing, but of some imperfect being preexistent.' To examine then the general rule pretended to amount from this general induction, or what truth there is in that philosophical maxim, *Ex nihilo nihil fit,* is the next point.

CHAP. V.

By what Manner of Induction, or Enumeration of Particulars, universal Rules or Maxims must be framed and supported. That no Induction can be brought to prove the Naturalist's Maxim, 'Of Nothing Nothing can be made.'

1. To frame a general rule or principle in any faculty, art, or science, there is no other means possible besides induction, or a sufficient enumeration of particular experiments to support it. The particulars from which this sufficiency must amount may be in some subjects fewer, in others more. How many soever the particular instances or alleged experiments be, the number of them will not suffice to support an universal rule, unless they erect our understandings to a clear view of the same reason, not only in all the particulars instanced in, but in all that can be brought of the same kind. Unless there be a clear resultance of the same reason in all, the induction fails, and the rule which is grounded on it must needs fall. For this cause, universal rules are easily framed in the mathematics, or in other arts whose subjects are more abstract, or not charged with multiplicity of considerations or ingredients; from whose least variation, whether by addition or subtraction, whether by further commixture or dissolution, the cause or reason of truth so varies, that the rule which constantly holds in a great many like particulars will not hold in all, because they are not absolutely or every way alike.

He which seriously observes the manner how right angles are framed, will without difficulty yield his assent unto this universal rule, 'that all right angles 121
are equal,' because he sees there is one and the same reason of absolute equality in all that can be imagined;

and this negative rule will by the same inspection win our assent without more ado 'that if any two angles be unequal, the one of them (at least) can be no right angle.' The consideration likewise of a few particulars will suffice to make up these universal, never-failing rules:

First, That the greater any circle is, the greater always will the angle of the semicircle be.

The second, That the angle of the least semicircle which can be imagined, is greater than the most capacious acute angle that can be made by the concurrence of two right lines. And yet it will as clearly appear, from the inspection of the same particulars from which the former rules do amount, that the angle of the greatest semicircle imaginable cannot possibly be so capacious as every right angle is. The consideration of the former rules, specially of the first and third, will clearly manifest that the quantity contained in these angles, how little soever they be, is divisible into infinite indeterminate parts, or divisible into such parts, without possible end or limitation of division: but albeit the difference of quantity between a right angle and the angle of a semicircle be potentially infinite, or infinitely divisible, according to parts or portions indeterminate; yet will it not hence follow, that the one angle is as great again as the other, according to the scale of any distinct or determinate quantity or expressible portions: and this observation in mathematical quantity would quickly check or discover the weakness of many calculatory arguments or inductions ofttimes used by great divines in matters moral or civil; as for example, that every sin deserveth punishment infinite, because every sin is an offence committed against an infinite Being or Majesty; and the greater or more sovereign the majesty is which we offend, the

greater always will the offence be, and meritorious of greater punishment. Yet all this only proves an infinity of indeterminate degrees in every offence against the Divine Majesty, by which it exceeds all offences of the same kind committed only against man; it no way infers an infinite excess or odds of actual determinate punishment or ill deserts [k]. For this reason we have derived the just award of everlasting supernatural pains unto temporary and transient (bodily or natural) pleasures, from the contempt of God's infinite goodness, which destinates no creatures unto everlasting death, but such as he had made capable of everlasting joys; nor were any of them infallibly destinated unto everlasting death, until they had by voluntary transgression, or continuance in despising of the riches of his goodness, made themselves uncapable of the bliss to which he had destinated them.

2. But to return unto the force or efficacy of induction: that, we say, is neither so clear nor so facile in matters physical or moral, as it is in the mathematics. Now the reason why perfect inductions are so difficultly made in matters natural, is, because the subject of natural philosophy is not so simple or uncompounded as mathematical bodies or figures are: and yet are natural bodies subject to greater variety of circumstances, more obnoxious to alteration by occurrences external, than abstract lines, or motionless figures or bodies are. The cunningest alchymist (albeit he could exactly temper his furnace to all the several degrees of heat that any fuel, of what kind soever, could afford) 122
cannot by any fire, or by any degree of heat which issues from it, hatch the most imperfect bird that flies; yet if he should hence infer that no birds could be

[k] See the first part of the Divine Essence and Attributes, ch. xx. p. 188. &c. of this volume.

hatched by any kind of heat, daily experience would convince his assertion of falsehood, and his induction, although it consisted of ten thousand instances or experiments taken from the heat of the forge or furnace, to be altogether lame. A man might try the like conclusion of hatching birds in all the sands that this island affords, upon the eggs of all the fowls that breed in it or about it, and find their barrenness and unaptness for bringing forth any flying creature to be as great as it is for bringing forth wheat or other corn: and I am persuaded the compost of this our soil is as unapt to bring forth the former effects, as our sands are: yet if any man should hence make this general induction, that no sand or[1] compost could perform this midwifery to the conception of any fowls, his error might be confuted by the ostriches which have been hatched in the sands of Arabia; and by some compost in Egypt, which performs that office unto young chickens which brood hens do with us. No man in his time, or since he died, hath been either more accurate or more industrious in observing the external causes of sickness and health, than Hippocrates was; and no question but he was as careful to take his observations, or frame his general rules, from multitude of experiences, as any philosopher or physician hath been. Notwithstanding[m], his observation concerning the nature and qualities of winds, and the dependence of men's health or sickness upon them, are farther out of date in France, than an almanack made the last year for the meridian of London would be this year for the meridian of Mexico. The same winds which in his country, or in countries wherein he made his observations, were most healthful, are most noisome

[1] See Macrobius in his relation of Augustus his Apophthegms.

[m] Vide Septalium in Hippoc. de aëre, aquis et locis.

in some parts of France. The diversity of the soil, whence winds in several regions arise or pass through, makes one and the same wind (in respect of the point or quarter of heaven from whence it comes) to produce quite contrary effects in several regions or situations. The east wind may in some regions dispose men's bodies to the jaundice, and yet purify men's blood in other places not far distant for latitude. So may the south wind in some regions taint men's bodies with consumptions, coughs, or other infirmities, and yet be healthful in other regions not much distant for longitude.

Let then the mere naturalist tire himself and his reader by long inductions, or with multitude of experiments in agents and subjects natural, for supporting his general rule, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, "Every thing is made of something," yet his observation will reach no farther than to agents or efficients, visible or limited. Albeit his experiments in this kind were infinite, this inference nevertheless, 'No visible agent can make any thing of nothing, therefore nothing can be made of nothing by an invisible or supernatural agent,' would be more disjointed than this following, 'No heat of fire or of the sun in what degree soever can hatch live creatures; *ergo*, the heat of the dam cannot hatch her young ones.' The difference between visible agents may be much greater than the difference between the heat or warmth of diverse bodies. No earthly bodies can produce heat in others but either by heat inherent in themselves or by motion; yet this will not conclude that no celestial body (the sun for example) can produce heat in bodies sublunary, unless itself be inher- 123
ently hot, or at least not without motion. It is more than probable that the sun is not formally or inherently hot; and yet, although it should stand still (as

once it did) in its sphere above our horizon, it would heat and warm us no less than now it doth, whilst it moveth. For conclusion; to make any perfect induction, sufficient to support an universal rule, from earthly bodies, which shall conclude bodies celestial, or from agents sublunary or visible, which shall as uniformly hold true in an agent invisible and supercelestial, is more difficult than to twist ropes of loose sand. That which the naturalist should prove, if he would be an atheist or infidel in grain, or oppose the truth of scriptures with probability, is, that there is no invisible or spiritual agent: and this is the point whereat the second objection aims; There can be no agent without a patient, no exercise of art or power without some matter or subject to work upon.

CHAP. VI.

The second Objection of the Naturalist, 'Every Agent presupposeth a Patient, or passive Subject, to work upon,' cannot be proved by any Induction. The contradictory to this Maxim proved by sufficient Induction.

1. *Actus agentium sunt in patiente bene disposito;* "The efficacy of every agent," saith the philosopher, "is in the patient fitly disposed to receive it;" and elsewhere he determines it as a positive truth, that every action is in the patient, not in the agent. And this his position may be ratified by perfect induction, or experiments impregnable: for every action is an operation, and every operation is so necessarily annexed unto the effect produced, that where the one is, the other needs must be; and every effect is in the patient, or at least is the patient. The softening of wax, the hardening of clay, the revival of vegetables of several kinds, are all actions proceeding from one and the same actual

force, or unvariable influence of the sun. The reason why the active force is but one and the same, and why the actions or operations are many and much different, is, because the active force is in the agent, whereas the action or operation is in the patient, and is diversely multiplied according to the diversity and multitude of the patients. We shall not need to question the universal truth of the former maxim, 'that every action is in the patient,' as some have done; for it holds as true in divinity as in philosophy, and most apparent in the subject whereof we treat. Creation itself is an action, a real action, yet not really in the Creator, but in the creature only; for no real attribute can be in the Creator which was not in him from eternity; the creature only begets beginning of being by creation, which before it had not. If, then, there can be no agency without an action, and every action be in the patient, the cause is concluded, that every agent, though omnipotent, supposeth a patient.

2. But it is one thing to suppose or require, another to presuppose or prerequire a patient; one thing to require or suppose a patient, another to require or suppose a matter or subject to work upon. We are, 124
then, to distinguish of patients, and betwixt the works wrought or affected by agents. A patient is usually taken for the matter or subject on which the agent doth exercise his active force, or out of which it produceth its work. Every finite agent, as well natural as artificial, doth prerequire and presuppose such a kind of patient, that is, some real matter or subject whereon to work; but this kind of patient is no just compeer, no full correlative to an agent universally taken. The relation betwixt an agent and patient, taken in this sense, is neither so formal or necessary as it is (*inter agens et actum*) between the agent and

that which is acted, between the efficient and the effect, or between the worker and his work. God, we grant, could be no actual agent, much less an omnipotent actual agent, without some act or work produced by him. As there could be no creature without a Creator, so could there be no Creator without a creature. But that which the naturalist is to prove, is, that the work of creation presupposeth some matter or subject for the Creator to work upon. To manifest the imperfection of his inductions to this purpose, and to clear our contradictory assertion, we are to distinguish or explicate the several works which are or can be wrought.

3. Three sorts of works the mere naturalist grants: 1. merely natural; 2. merely artificial; 3. partly natural, partly artificial. Works of the last rank, for instance, are physical medicines, or all such works as nature of her own accord doth not attempt or undertake, but only as she is set a-working by art. Nature makes no physical doses, but only affords the simples of which they are compounded by the apothecary, who notwithstanding cannot compound them without the ministry or operation of nature. The physician may allot the several quantity of every ingredient, besides the proportion betwixt them, but the mixture must be immediately effected by heat or other natural qualities: so likewise must the extraction or expression of many simples be wrought by nature, but at the appointment or direction of the physician. Nature doth not attempt the making of bell-metal, much less of bells; and yet she affords all the ingredients to the bell-founder, who cannot mix them by any art or skill without the heat of the fire or other operations of nature set on work or directed by him. Works merely natural comprehend all sorts of bodies generable, whether the elements or

bodies mixed. The generation of every such body presupposeth a mutation or alteration of qualities in the matter before it become capable of a new form or nature. Every alteration of quality wrought in any sublunary body (whether it be a previal disposition or introduction to a new form or nature, or whether it be accomplished without generation of any new substance) is the proper effect or work of the agent which causeth it: so is every artificial work or form the effect or work of the artificer: so that art hath its proper effects as well as nature, and every artificial effect or work supposeth an efficiency or agency in the art or artist; yet doth not the exercise of this active force or efficiency either presuppose or require any such passive alteration of quality in the matter or subject whereon it works, as nature requires in her patients. Every statue or image of wood is the effect of the statuary, or a work of the art of imagery; yet do not these works, being merely artificial, either suppose or necessarily require any alteration of quality in stone and wood. The statuary produceth no natu- 125
ral effect or quality which was not in the stone before, but only makes that visible and apparent to the eye which was formerly hidden or inveiled in the stone. Every letter of the Decalogue was in the tables of stone before they were engraven either by the finger of God or by Moses, and became legible only by their art or skill of engraving; yet not made legible by any addition of substance, of quantity, or quality, but by mere abscision of quantitative parts: and this abscision, from which visible characters or terminate figures result, whether in wood or stone, is the proper effect of the carver or engraver. Both these inductions following, universally taken, are false, though both true in their proper subject: 1. 'No statuary or carver, or

other like artificer, can produce his proper work without some abscision or variation of quantity in the subject whereon he works; therefore nature cannot produce her proper effects without some alteration of quantity in the matter or subject wherein she works.' 2. 'Natural agents or efficients never produce their proper effects but by working some alteration of quality in the matter; therefore no artificer can produce the proper works of his art without the like alteration of quality in the subject whereon he works.' Nor will it follow, that because effects merely artificial may be wrought without any alteration of quality, therefore mixed effects, or works partly natural partly artificial, as compounded medicines or bell-metal, can be so wrought. Least of all can it be inferred, that because art as well as nature supposeth a subject preexistent whereon to work, therefore the agent supernatural, or the efficient superartificial, always presupposeth some matter or subject preexistent, out of which or in which he produceth his proper work. The reason why the former inductions fail is because the agents or efficients are of a different rank or kind; and the prohibition [n] holds as true in point of induction as of demonstration, *Non licet transcendere a genere ad genus;* He that will demonstrate any conclusion must not rove from one kind of subject to another. And the reason why in thus roving he shall certainly fail of his intended conclusion, is, because the principles whence the intended conclusion must be inferred cannot be gathered but by induction, and no induction can prove any general maxim unless it consist of particulars of the same kind. A philosophical maxim cannot be gathered from inductions merely mathematical, nor mathema-

[n] Vide Arist. lib. 1. Poster. Analyt. cap. 7.

tical principles from experiments philosophical; nor can artificial maxims or conclusions (especially negative) be gathered from experiments natural, nor maxims natural from observations in subjects merely artificial. Least of all can any theological maxims be ratified from experiments merely natural, artificial, or mathematical, but only by inductions or reasons abstract and metaphysical; that is, such as hold true in all arts or sciences whatsoever. The only certain rule which all the former inductions can afford is this: There can be no real effect, whether artificial, natural, or supernatural, without an efficient; nothing which now is not, or sometimes was not, could possibly be made without some agent or maker; between every natural agent and its patient, between every artificer and his work, there always results a mutual relation of efficient and effect. But this rule will not abide the turning: Between every efficient and its proper effect there always results a mutual relation of agent and patient; if by this term *patient* we understand a matter or subject preexistent to the exercise of the agent's efficiency.

4. The usual division of agents into artificial, natu- 126
ral, and supernatural, supposeth a threefold diversity in their objects, betwixt which there is this proportion: as nature always affordeth art a complete natural subject to work upon; so the supernatural agent, or supreme efficient, exhibits that imperfect substance or matter unto nature which she brings unto perfection. Nature doth so unto art as it is done to her by a benefactor supernatural. Unto this observation upon the former division we can add no more, nor can any more be required, besides a just proof that there is an agent supernatural, which sometimes had no matter at all to work upon, but made even nature herself, and

the passive capacity or subject whereon she works, of no work or matter preexistent. The matter itself and nature itself are the immediate effects of his active force or efficiency. Now to beat the naturalist at his own weapon, we are to make proof of this assertion by full induction, and strength of reason grounded upon experiments in every subject wherein the naturalist can instance. First, it is universally true of all the works, as well of nature as of art, which now are perfect and sometimes were not so, that they did not make themselves, but had respectively their several makers or efficient causes, which brought them unto that perfect estate and condition which now they have. The most perfect works of nature cannot put themselves into a perfect artificial form without the help of some artificer. Stones do not naturally grow into statues, nor trees into the pictures or images of men or birds; brass and copper, with other metals conceived in the bowels of the earth, do not, either by themselves or by the help of natural causes which produce them, cast or mould themselves into guns or bullets; the earth and water do not work themselves into the live substance of plants or vegetables, but are first wrought, and, as it were, kneaded together, by the heat of the sun, first altered, and then incorporated into the substance of such trees by the vegetative faculty which is actually resident and preexistent in the trees or plants which are nourished by them. There is no sublunary substance which did not take beginning, either entirely and altogether, or piecemeal and successively. The elemental bodies of the air and water were not totally the same a thousand years ago that now they are; both continue the same they were by equivalency of succeeding parts, or daily addition by new generation. Now successive generation sup-

poseth an end or destruction of that that was, and a beginning of that which succeeds in its place; and the beginning of every thing supposeth a beginner or cause efficient to give it being. The race or continuation of more perfect sublunary substances, as of vegetables and moving creatures, remains the same, not by equivalency of succeeding parts, but by a total production of distinct individuals; and every distinct individual tree or living creature hath its immediate and proper efficient as well as its material cause: nothing can give itself a distinct numerical being.

5. What is the reason, then, why the works of nature, which are perfected in their kind by their proper efficients, (as trees come to full growth,) cannot transform themselves into bodies artificial without the work of the artificer? What is the reason why the imperfect mass wherein the seeds of nature are contained cannot grow up into a perfect or complete body natural, without the efficiency of some other in the same kind already complete? *Fortes creantur fortibus.* Nature makes nothing perfect but by the help of some agent formerly made perfect. Doth the per- 127
fection of bodies artificial, by an indispensable law of necessity, require a perfect work of nature preexistent to the operation of art; and doth this perfect work of nature, be it brass, wood, or stone, by a like indispensable law of necessity, require an imperfect mass or matter preexistent to the natural agents or efficients, which mould or knead it into its perfect or specifical form? And shall not this imperfect mass, with all its several elements or ingredients that can be required to the perfection of any natural body, more necessarily require some precedent efficient cause of its imperfect being or existence? This cannot be conceived; for if these imperfect substances, whereof any natural body

is made, could either give beginning of being to themselves, or have it from no cause efficient, they should be in this respect much more perfect than the more perfect works of nature, in that they either make themselves or have no maker.

Upon this principle of nature, or from this impossibility in nature, 'that any visible work, whether natural or artificial, should either give itself being or have its being from no cause precedent,' did Tully[o] rightly argue, that as a man coming into an house wherein were no live creatures save rats and mice, could not conceive that either the house did make itself or had no other maker besides these rats and mice which were found in it; so neither can it be imagined that this visible sphere, wherein the works of art and nature are daily seen, and do daily begin to be and expire, could either make itself or have being of itself, without beginning, without a maker superartificial, or an efficient supernatural. Every part of this universe, considered alone, is a work of nature; but the exquisite harmony between them is a work more than artificial. All that nature can add to art or art to nature is but a shadow of that great Artificer's skill which composed the several works of nature into so excellent a form, and tuneth their discording qualities into such exact harmony. The induction of Tully is more briefly but more pithily and expressly gathered by our apostle, Heb. iii. 4: *Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God.* But if every house be built by some man, how is God said to build all things? shall every builder of an house be a God? No: but whatsoever man doth build, God doth likewise build; for *except the Lord doth build*

[o] See Tully, Lib. de Natura Deorum.

the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it, Psalm cxxvii. 1. Better it were to be idle, or to do nothing, than either to be laborious in building houses, or watchful in guarding cities strongly built, unless the Lord do afford not only his concurrence, but his blessing to the labours of the one and to the watchfulness of the other. But in this argument we may expatiate, without impeachment of digression from the matter or of diversion from our aim, in the following treatise of Divine Providence.

6. This present treatise requires an induction sufficient to prove that every visible or sublunary substance, as well the common matter whereof all such things are made as the several forms which are produced out of it, have an efficient cause precedent to their making or production. For the several forms or bodies generable which are constituted by them the induction is as clear to every man's sense or understanding as any mathematical induction can be. The naturalist is neither able nor disposed to except against the universality of it, or to instance in any sublunary body which hath not a true efficient cause, or an agent 128
precedent, from whose efficacy its physical or essential form was either made or did result. The question only remains about the efficiency or production of the prime or common matter. Seeing it is the mother of generation, we will not vex the naturalist by demanding a generative cause efficient of its being; but that it must have some cause efficient we shall enforce him to grant, from a general maxim most in request with men of his profession: the maxim is, 'that the philosophical progress from effects to their causes, or from inferior to superior causes, is not like arithmetical or geometrical progressions: it cannot be infinite.' We must at length come to one supreme cause efficient,

which, in that it is supreme, is a cause of causes, but no effect; and being no effect nor cause subordinate to any other agent, it can have no limit of being, it can admit no restraint in working. Whatsoever we can conceive as possible to have limited being, or beginning of such being, must have both from it and by it. Now if the perfect works of nature, bodies sublunary of what kind soever, suppose a possibility physical included in the prime and common matter before they have actual being, if it imply no contradiction for them to have beginning of being, it will imply no contradiction that the prime matter itself, or imperfect mass whereof they are made, should have a beginning of its imperfect being; that physical being which it hath, doth presuppose a logical possibility of being as it is; that is, no contradiction for it sometimes to be and sometimes not to have been. This supreme cause or agent, which (as we suppose) did reduce the logical possibility of the prime matter of sublunary bodies into act, cannot be the heavens, or any part of the host of heaven, neither the sun, moon, nor stars; for, albeit the sun be the efficient cause by which most works of nature in this sublunary part of the world are brought to perfection, yet it is no cause at all of that imperfect mass or part of nature on which it works. Unless it had some matter to work upon, it could produce no real or solid effect by its influence, light, or motion, however assisted with the influence of other stars or planets; yet must this prime matter have some cause, otherwise it would be more perfect than the bodily substances which are made of it; for they all stand in need, both of this prime matter as a cause in its kind concurrent to their production, and of the efficiency of the sun or other celestial agents to work or fashion the materials or

ingredients of which they are made. If either this common matter of sublunary substances, or the sun which works upon it, had no superior cause to limit their being or distinguish their offices, both of them should be infinite in being, both infinite in operation. Now if the matter were infinite in being, the sun or other celestial agents could have no being but in it or from it; for if the sun were infinite in operation, the matter itself could be nothing at all, no part of nature, unless it were a work or effect of the sun. Infinity in being excludes all possibility of other being, save in it and from it; and infinity in operation supposeth all things that are limited, whether in being or operation, to be its works, or resultances of its illimited efficacy.

CHAP. VII. 129

Shewing, by Reasons philosophical, that as well the physical Matter of Bodies sublunary as the celestial Bodies which work upon it were of necessity to have a Beginning of their Being and Duration.

1. For further demonstration, that as well the sun, which is the efficient general, as the prime matter, which is the common mother of bodies sublunary, had a beginning of being, there can be no mean either more forcible or more plausible than another maxim much embraced and insisted upon by the great philosopher, to wit, that as well the efficient as the material cause derive the necessity of their causality from the end or final cause unto which they are destinated. The sun doth not run its daily course from east to west, or make its annual progress from north to south, to get itself heat, or for the increase of its native force or vigour by change of climates, but for the propagation of vegetables, for the continuance of life and

health in more perfect sublunary substances. If, then, we can demonstrate that those vegetables or more perfect sublunary bodies for whose continual propagation, for the continuance of whose life and welfare the sun becomes so indefatigable in its course, had a true beginning of being, that the propagation is not infinitely circular, the cause will be concluded, that as well the common matter whereof they are made, as the sun itself which produceth them, had a beginning of being and operation from the same supreme Cause which appointed the sun thus to dispense its heat and influence for the relief and comfort of this inferior world. To prove that these sublunary more perfect bodies (as vegetables, &c.) had a beginning of being or propagation, no argument can be more effectual to the naturalist, or others that will take it into serious consideration, than the discussion of that problem which Plutarch hath propounded, 'whether the egg were before the hen, or the hen before the egg.' The state of the question will be the same in all more perfect vegetables or living creatures, which usually grow from an imperfect or weak estate to a more perfect and stronger: 'whether the acorn were before the oak, or the oak before the acorn; whether the lion had precedency of nature to the lion's whelp, or the lion's whelp unto the lion.' The induction may be for either part most complete, in respect of all times and of all places, if with the naturalist we imagine the world to have been without beginning or without ending. No naturalist can ever instance in any more perfect feathered fowl which was not first covered with a shell or contained in some more imperfect film, in any bull which was not first a calf, in any lion which was not first a whelp, in any oak which did not first spring from an acorn; unless he instance in

painted trees, in brazen bulls, or artificial lions. Of live natural substances it is universally true, *Omnia ortus habent, suaque certa incrementa:* "All have their beginning, all their certain increase or augmentation." The induction, again, is for the other party as complete and perfect: there never was a true acorn which did not presuppose an oak, nor a lion's whelp which did not presuppose a lion to beget it and a lioness to bring it forth. Now every productive cause, every 130
live substance, which produceth another by proper causality or efficiency, hath always precedency of nature and of time in respect of that which is produced by it: the lion is in order of nature and of time before his whelp, and yet is every lion wherein the naturalist can instance a whelp before it be a lion; so is the oak in order of nature and of time before the acorn, and yet cannot the naturalist instance in any oak which was not an acorn or plant before it grew to be an oak. If, then, either the race of lions or the propagation of oaks had no beginning, it would inevitably follow that oaks had been perpetually before acorns, and acorns perpetually before oaks; that lions' whelps from eternity had precedency or priority of time of lions, and lions the like precedency or priority of time of their whelps; and if they had been mutually each before other from eternity, according to priority of time and nature, they must have been mutually each after other. How the naturalist will be able to digest this circular revolution of priority and posteriority, in respect of the same individual natures, or what he will say to these following inconveniences, I cannot tell, but desire to know. Every whole or perfect fish, which the naturalist hath heard or read of, had beginning of its individual being from spawn. This induction is most complete and perfect in the school of nature, most

irrefragable by the supposition of the naturalist with whom we dispute. Every fish hath a beginning from spawn, and that which hath a beginning from spawn hath a beginning of its being: no fish or spawn is or hath been immortal, or without beginning. Now if it be universally true that every particular fish hath its beginning, it implies an evident contradiction to say that the race of fishes, which consist only of particular fishes, was without beginning. There must, in every race of fishes, be some first fishes or first spawns, before which there was none of the same kind, from which this mutual propagation did take its beginning; and though this propagation be without end, yet could it not be without beginning, unless we would grant that fishes are not only of an incorruptible nature, but of a nature infinite or eternal. If there were no beginning of this mutual propagation, it would be demanded whether the number of fishes or lions that shall be (granting what the naturalists suppose, that this propagation shall be endless) can ever be as great as the number of those fishes and lions that have been? or whether the number of those that have been may not be conceived to be more infinite, or in another sort infinite, than the number of those that shall be? That the number of fishes or lions which from this time forward may be, (suppose the world were never to end,) can be no otherwise infinite than potentially or successively only, or by addition, because there shall never be any last lion or fish, &c., after which there shall be no more, the naturalist will not deny; for those lions or fishes which from this point of time shall be, have as yet no actual being, nor have they before this time had any such being: whence it is clear that their number can never be actually infinite, but infinite only by addition, as continuate quantity is

by division. [p] But if fishes have been produced from 131
spawn, and spawn from fishes, without any beginning of time, we must of necessity grant that there have been fishes, lions, oaks, &c. propagated each from other, for number actually infinite; for every fish which could produce spawn had actual being before it could yield spawn, and every spawn whereof any fish is made hath actual being before any fish can be made of it: whence, if this propagation had been without beginning, their number must needs be actually infinite, so infinite that there could have been no more than have been, that there can be no more than now are. That only is actually infinite unto which nothing of the same kind can be added. If this mutual propagation had been from eternity, the number of things propagated should have been actually infinite in every point of time imaginable. It is impossible that any thing should be actually infinite from eternity, and not be alike actually infinite throughout every part of time: as infinite yesterday as to-day, or as it shall be to-morrow. It is again impossible that any thing should be actually infinite in any part of time, or by any succession of time, which was not infinite from eternity and before all times. If we shall suffer our imaginations of mutual propagations to rove backward without an imagination or acknowledgment of some

[p] Ego certe hac in re laudo Aristotelem, quod cum impossibilitatem (ut ita dixerim) æternorum motuum, et corporum, non præviderit, maluit ab æterno esse pulchram hanc mundi faciem, quam aliquando ex æterna deformitate emersisse. Oportuit vero ipsum æternitatem illam temporis meditari; reperisset si quidem, ut neque in corpore, neque in loco (hæc enim ille demonstravit) ita neque in tempore infinitatem esse potuisse: si quidem est etiam tempus quantum, ut et corpus, et locus. Si igitur omnia quanta finita, tempus quoque totum finitum est, et erit. Quare factus est aliquando mundus ex nihilo.—Vallesius de sacra Philosoph. p. 18.

first beginning to stay or limit them, our souls shall find as little rest (with less security) as Noah's dove did whilst the earth was overflowed with water, if she had not returned to the ark. Unless we thus pitch upon a first beginning of time and all things temporal, we shall not only make shipwreck of faith, but drench our immortal souls in a bottomless lake or pool of absurdities, even in nature.

2. The conclusion arising from these premises is, that albeit natural reason or discourse could never have found out that which Moses hath written, concerning the particular manner of the world's creation; as that it, and all things in it, all the several originals of propagation, were created in six days; yet Moses his narrations can only give satisfaction to such problems, as men by light of nature may propose or cast, but can never without the light of God's word be able to assoil. By so much of this light as Moses in the first chapter of Genesis holds out unto us, we may easily free ourselves from perpetual wandering in that inextricable maze of mutual or circular precedency, between things generable, and their generative efficients, which the naturalist can never avoid, until with us he grant that which the [q] philosopher by the light of

q Aristot. nono Metaphysicorum, cap. 8. Manifestum est quod actus prius potentia est. Dico autem non solum illa potentia determinata quæ dicitur principium transmutatorium in alio, prout aliud est, sed prorsus omni motivo, et Statorio principio. Et 14. Metaphys. cap. 7. Quare vita, et ævum continuum, et æternum Deo inest. Hoc enim est Deus quicunque vero (ut Pythagorici, et Speusippus p u ta) optimum et pulcherrimum non esse in principio, eo quod plantarum quoque ac animalium principia, causæ quidem sunt: bonum vero, et perfectum in iis esse, quæ ex his sunt, non recte putant. Sperma namque ex aliis prioribus perfectis est, neque sperma primum est, sed quod perfectum est: veluti hominem dicere quispiam possit priorem spermate esse, non illum, qui eo generatur, sed alium, ex quo ipsum sperma est. Quod itaque est quædam æterna, immobilisque substantia, et a sensibilibus separata, constat ex dictis.

nature did indefinitely teach, *Actus prior est potentia.* "That which hath perfect being, is simply and absolutely before that which proceedeth from it, or is brought to perfection by it." Thus Moses tells us, Gen. i. 11, *that there was an earth before there was any grass, that out of this earth was brought forth herb yielding seed, and fruit trees yielding fruit with seed in them, before there was any propagation by seed.* So he tells us again, ver. 21, *that God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth in the waters after their kind, before there was any spawn of fishes, or seed of fowls:* for so it follows in the twenty-second verse, that *God blessed them,* after 132
he had made them, saying, *Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters and the seas, and let fowl multiply on the earth:* and it was this blessing upon fish and fowl (thus created at once, that is, made perfect in their kind, not by growth or succession, but by present operation of his omnipotent power) which gave first beginning to the natural propagation of fishes and fowls by seed or spawn. Again, inasmuch as the greatest whales or other creatures most perfect in their kind, though produced in a moment, did presuppose a possibility of their being, and in their most perfect actual being include more than a possibility of not being, a necessary inclination to return unto the matter or mass out of which they were made. This being which they have, presupposeth an infinite and pure act, which every way hath precedency of them, as having no cause at all of his being, but is being itself, without possibility of not being. The manner or method which Moses observed in the creation was this; he made the heaven and earth and first mass of mere nothing, that is, without any mass or subject visible or invisible preexistent, whereon to work.

That imperfect mass of this great sphere, now distinguished into its several parts, and within six days adorned and beautified in every part beyond all skill of art, was the first effect or prime work in order of time or nature of his all-sufficient active power or efficiency. Out of this mass he made all things visible in their kind, not by means or efficiency natural, but by the same supernatural or omnipotent power by which he made the first mass out of nothing. In the prime and cardinal works of the six days, the Almighty did proceed, though by supernatural efficiency in that order or method, which nature, by his appointment, since hath followed. Man, which is the most perfect visible creature, was the last made, and next before him the beasts of the field, which are next in perfection to him; next before them, the fowls of the air and fishes of the sea; and immediately before them the sun, the moon, and the stars; but in the several fountains or roots of propagation by seed, he began the contrary way; he first made man perfect, before he gave him the power of propagation. So did he make every living creature actually perfect in his kind, before he gave them power to increase and multiply by natural seed or inchoation of new being.

3. It is a conceit groundless, either in philosophy or divinity, which some late divines, as well of the Romish as of reformed churches, not without fair pretence of St. Augustine's [r] authority, have taught, that all things

[r] Divus Augustinus censet omnia esse creata simul eodem momento, seu in eodem nunc; illam vero partitionem dierum, non significare partes temporis, sed distinctionem, et gradus quosdam naturæ rerum: atque factum esse hominem ex terra, non actu præexistente, sed existente potentia in ipso, velut quivis dicitur nostrum. vere factus ex quatuor elementis, tametsi nulla terra, aut aqua erat actu id ex quo facti sumus, sed semen et sanguis. Itaque ut unico intuitu tota facies, et ejus omnes partes, in speculo exprimuntur, ita unica jussione Dei, constitisse totam hanc corpoream molem, et in ea refulsisse illum di-

were created at once or in one day, by the Almighty Maker; that the mention of God's six days work is interserted by Moses, only for distinction sake, or in respect of our incapacity to conceive distinctly of God's works. But if all things had been made in this sense, at once, that is, upon one day, no reason could be given why God's commendation of something which he made should be omitted, and expressed upon the making of 133
others; or why the commendation of his works should have been oftener expressed than once, if the production or finishing of all things which he made had been momentary, or in the compass of one day. Now in the first part of Moses his history, *In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth,* we do not read that *God saw it was good.* What is the reason? Because as yet they were not perfected in their kind, but destinated only unto more perfection. Of the light which was created the first day, saith Moses, *God saw that it was good.* But so he saith not of the second day's work, which was the separation or division between the waters which are above the firmament, and the waters beneath it. What doth this omission of the divine approbation intimate unto us? Thus much, if no more; that the second day's work did not bring the waters to that perfection and use whereunto they were

vinitatis fulgorem, quem vocamus naturam. Cæterum quia non omnes sancti hoc ita intelligunt, alia responsione est opus. Vallesius de Sacra Philos. cap. 1. p. 22. Neque vero hoc ullam arguit primæ causæ debilitatem. Non enim eam causam naturalem ponimus, quæque faciat semper quantum potest, sed liberam et sapientissimam, quæ facit ut maxime expedit, atque omnia pulcherrima et concinna, in numero, pondere et mensura. Quapropter verba illa capitis 18. Ecclesiastici, *Qui vivit in æternum creavit omnia simul,* ego ita interpretor; Creata esse omnia intra illam hebdomadam, perfectumque esse mundum, ita ut nulla ejus pars princeps, quæque a creatione habitura esset initium, deesset. Nam ut initio capitis secundi dicitur, perfecti sunt cœli et terra, et omnis ornatus eorum, complevitque Deus die sexta opus suum.—Valles. cap. 1. p. 45.

destinated. But of the third day's work, in which the earth was severed from the waters under the firmament, and enabled by his creative power to bring forth herbs and other vegetables, *God* (saith Moses) *saw that it was good;* and so it is likewise said of the fourth day's work, in which the sun and moon and the stars were made; and so likewise of the fifth, wherein the water was authorized to bring forth fowls and fishes perfect in their kind; and lastly, of the sixth day, wherein man was made, it is said, that God saw all that he had made, and it was *exceeding good.* To explicate every day's work in particular, would require a larger treatise than we project our intended commentaries upon the Apostles' Creed shall be. Of such evangelical mysteries, as the history of the sixth day's work and the seventh day's rest did by way of emblem portend or foreshadow, we shall have occasion to treat, when we come unto the Son of God's consecration unto his everlasting priesthood; or of the Son of man's residing three days and three nights in the womb of the earth: which speech of our Saviour cannot be verified either of three natural days or of three artificial days and nights, but hath a peculiar reference to three of those evenings and mornings which Moses mentioneth in the history of the creation. The task for the present undertaken was to shew the possibility of the creation[s], or making all things of

[s] Si facta omnino non sunt (viz. corpora cœlestia) fit ut sint per sese ab æterno, et esse proprio existentia. Quapropter nullum illorum ab alio pendeat, aut alio posterius fit, sed per sese sint, et operentur ab æterno (cum operatio procedat a cujusque rei natura, et proprio esse:) quare nulla illis prior causa sit, (si enim hæc effecta ab alio non sunt, non fit ulla eorum causa) quapropter mundus hic universus, neque unus erit, neque totus, neque perfectus, cum non pendeat totus ab unica virtute et causa, neque causæ omnes in unam omnium primam, referantur: sed sint multæ mundi partes, a quibus non procedatur ad ullam aliam superiorem, et priorem hoc vero fieri non potest.

nothing, and that there is a necessity in nature, that things generable should have a beginning, that the propagation of living creatures could not be from eternity, not before all times imaginable; and if sublunary substances or vegetables had a beginning, not the elements only whereof they are made, but the heavens themselves, the sun, the moon, the stars, by whose influence they are produced, must have their beginning too; because the end of their being, of their operation, of continuance in their course or order, is for the continual propagation of vegetables and living bodies. I may conclude this first point 134
with that acute collection of Justin Martyr[t]: Τοῦ ἡλίου μὴ ὄντος, περιττὸς ἦν ὁ ὀφθαλμός· καὶ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ μὴ ὄντος, περιττὸς ἦν ὁ ἥλιος· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ δι' ἑκάτερον ἀναγκαῖος ἑκάτερος, γενητὸς ἄρα ἑκάτερος. Τὸ γὰρ ἀγένητον δι' οὐδέν ἐστιν ἀγένητον, ἀλλὰ δι' αὐτὸ μόνον, μᾶλλον δὲ οὐ δι' αὐτό· ἀναίτιον γὰρ τὸ ἀναίτιον: "If there were no sun, there could be no use of the eye, and if there were no eye, there should be no use of the great eye of this world, at least of its light. But inasmuch as the sun is necessary for the eye, and the eye for the sun, there is a necessity that both of them should have a beginning of being. For that which hath no beginning of being

Nam aut illæ partes habent aliquam naturam sive essentiam communem, aut omnino habent nihil commune. Ex adeo diversis, ut nihil commune dicatur de illis, nulla ratione potest conflari unum: Nam neque ordo esse potest inter omnino diversa. Ordo enim secundum aliquid commune est, dicimus enim inter Petrum et Franciscum ordinem quendam esse.—Vallesius de sacra Philosoph. p. 15. Si concedis partes illas mundi habere aliquam essentiam communem; constat, quandoquidem non sunt omnino eadem, habere eas aliquid commune et aliquid diversum. Est autem quod commune unum: quæ diversa multa. Illud ergo commune prius erit illis omnibus diversis: si quidem ex eo constant hæc: non ergo erant illæ partes, suo quæque ordine primæ causæ, sed pendebant illæ omnes ab aliqua priori causa, a qua data erat eis communis illa essentia.—Ib. p. 16.

[t] [Quæst. Christ. ad Græcos. In Append. ed. Ben. p. 535.]

cannot have its being for any other sake besides its own, nor can we truly say that it is for its own sake." And this author's reason for this assertion is most judiciously acute: ἀναίτιον γὰρ τὸ ἀναίτιον: *præter causam enim est cujus causa non est,* so the Latin translator: the author's full meaning is, 'That which hath no efficient cause to give it beginning of being, can have no final cause of its being, or rather no cause at all, whether final, formal, or material;' but is itself the cause of causes, the prime efficient by which all things are what they are, and the last end or final cause for which they are.

CHAP. VIII.

Discussing the second general proposed, Whether the Making Something of Nothing rightly argue a Power Omnipotent.

1. THE discussion[t] of the second general principle might well have had its admission into divinity denied, had not some school-divines, by disputing whether there can be any instrumental cause of creation, given it a colourable pretence for intruding itself. Their meaning may in more civil language be thus expressed: "Whether the power of creating may by omnipotency be delegated to any agent not omnipotent?" That omnipotency itself cannot be delegated, all agree. Now if the production of spiritual grace in the heart of man be a true and proper effect of creative power, they who teach that the sacraments of the gospel do confer grace *ex opere operato,* that is, by their proper efficacy, are engaged to make proof, that the power of creation may be delegated by the Almighty Father either to the consecrated sacramentary elements, or to the priest which consecrates them. But leaving the

[t] See chap. iii. § 3.

discussion of this question (in the explication of whose terms or meaning the favourers or maintainers of it do not agree) unto its proper place, our present question is, whether ability to create substances visible or invisible doth necessarily infer it to be omnipotent? Spiritual grace, all grant, is no substance; but here again the schoolmen have troubled themselves and their readers with a question, if not more curious, yet as unnecessary as the former; as, whether this visible world, or at least some part of it, might not have been created immediately by angels, as by God's instruments? The question (perhaps) might be more pertinent and more distinct were it framed thus: Whether to make any visible or invisible substance of nothing, or without any matter precedent, which should remain as an ingredient in the substance made, do rightly infer the immediate maker to be omnipotent? That any cause efficient, or substance, which hath been created, or hereafter may be created, could be enabled to create or make any other substance without any 135
entity preexistent whereof it should be made, is an hypothesis or supposal which hath no other ground, either in philosophy or divinity, besides the uncertain grounds from which some have attempted to prove that creation is a prerogative of the one Omnipotent, which cannot be delegated to any other. This truth some labour to prove from this maxim: *Inter ens et non ens infinita distantia est:* "Between something, between any thing which truly is, and mere nothing, there is an infinite distance or disparity." Now this breach of disparity, or distance infinite, (which they conceive,) between something and nothing, cannot be fully made up, save only by power truly infinite, whence it may seem concluded, that it is impossible for any thing to be made of nothing, save only by power in itself omni-

potent, or absolutely infinite: the conclusion itself, or the last proposition in the inference, I verily believe to be most true; but the mean to infer it, or manner of inferring it, is not so certain as the conclusion is sound; the argument is but calculatory: and this kind of argument is deceitful, unless the degrees of proportion, whether between the disparity or congruity of terms compared, be determinate and certain; the degrees of disparity between something and nothing cannot be more in number, or more infinite, than are the entitive degrees of any created substance; and these are not actually or absolutely infinite, nor can the disparity betwixt something and nothing, betwixt nothing and the most excellent creature that is, be so great or so absolutely infinite, as is the disparity betwixt the most excellent creature that is or can be, and the one omnipotent Creator, who alone is absolutely infinite.

2. But be it only supposed, no way granted, that the power of making some visible substance out of nothing might be delegated to some creature, the exercise of this power thus delegated would not infer the exerciser of it, but only the author, to be omnipotent. For to be omnipotent includes as much as to be able to do all things which imply no contradiction; as much as to make all things, that can be conceived as logically possible, out of nothing, because all sorts or kinds of being, numerable or comprehensible, are eminently contained in the incomprehensible essence, of which the attribute of omnipotency is a chief prerogative. It is not then all one, to be enabled to make something, suppose a gnat or fly, out of nothing, and to be able to make as many things as now are extant in the world, or much better than these are, out of mere nothing. It is a maxim evident by light of reason, that no donor can really give more than he

hath to give; suppose he were willing, enabled and authorized, to give himself; to give his whole nature with the appurtenances to any other creature already extant, or in possibility to be created. It being then supposed that an angel, by some special delegation from the incomprehensible essence or power omnipotent, might be enabled to make something of nothing, it were not possible that he should make any nature or essence more excellent than himself; yet is it possible that there might be some more excellent created substance than this angel; yea, of necessity there should be a possibility of his being more excellent in his kind than now he is. However, for him to give, for him to bestow a more excellent being upon that which is not, than for the present he himself hath, is no way possible: suppose then he might entirely alienate from himself, or bequeath the best being which for the 136
present he hath, upon some possibility of being, or advance some numerable not-being to his own estate by his utter annihilation, this could not argue him to be omnipotent, because there be many other effects possible, which are not in his power to produce, albeit he could resume that which he had given unto another, and bestow it again where he pleased. Lastly, seeing the prime Essence, who alone is absolutely infinite, did not make all things out of nothing by a necessity of nature, but because it was his will so to make them, no creature, by any delegated power imaginable, could possibly make any one thing, or more things, out of nothing, besides those which the Omnipotent was willing should be so made, nor these any better, either for substance or quality, than his will was they should be. Nor could any creature be enabled, by his will, out of nothing to make any thing which was not eminently contained in the nature of that creature to whom this power of

creating is supposed to be by his will delegated. For albeit some efficient or productive causes bring forth effects for substance or quality more excellent than themselves, yet this they never do, this they cannot do, unless they work upon some advantage, which the subject or matter whereon they work doth afford them; but this advantage cannot be supposed in the production of any substance out of no subject or matter pre-existent. All the excellency which any effect or substance so produced can have, must be entirely derived from its efficient; and that can be no greater excellency or perfection than the efficient itself hath; not altogether so great, because it must be eminently contained in the perfection of its efficient; if so be the efficient have any perfection or being left, after the production of such an effect: so that every efficient cause which is, or can be supposed as an instrumental cause of creation, or as enabled to produce something out of nothing, is thus far limited, that it can produce no effect more excellent than itself, and being thus limited in itself, and by dependance on an higher cause, as well in its being as in its operation, it cannot be conceived to be omnipotent; for that includes as much as to be illimited in operation, or, which is all one, to be the operative power of the incomprehensible essence, or of being infinite.

3. But though to be able to make something out of nothing be not formally æquipollent to the attribute of omnipotency; yet can it not hence be concluded, that any agent besides the one Omnipotent is either able or can be enabled to produce the least substance that is, the least portion or matter ingredient to any bodily substance out of mere nothing. To lay the first foundation or beginning of being of any finite substance, is the sole effect of being itself, and therefore of that

which is truly infinite in operation. Whatsoever is finite or limited, can have no other kind of being, than borrowed or participated; and this kind of being must be immediately derived without intervention of any instrumental cause, from being not participated or borrowed, but from increated and authentic being. To create, is to give actual being or existence, without the help or furtherance of any contributor or confounder. Now if this power of creating could possibly be delegated to any created substance, it were possible for that which is created by it to have its being *extra infinitum esse*, that is, it should not be immediately and entirely contained in the infinite and incomprehensible essence or being. For in this very supposal, 'that one created substance might by power delegated from omnipotency create another,' it is necessarily im- 137
plied, that the substance created should have its being entirely, or part of its being immediately, from the other, which by power delegated is supposed to create it; and having such being as it hath, either entirely or in part immediately from the other, it could not be immediately and entirely contained in the first Cause of all things: and if the least substance possible could have its being, not immediately and entirely from the first Cause, or supreme Efficient, he could not be actually and absolutely infinite in being, or omnipotent in working: for that only is absolutely infinite, or infinite in being, in which all things possible are immediately contained; without whose incomprehensible being nothing can have existence; without whose immediate operation nothing can begin to be or exist.

These agitations or discussions may notify unto us the strength and soundness of that treble rule or fundamental principle laid by others, and before touched by

us. First, it is peculiar unto art to turn bodies, already formed and perfected by nature, into another fashion: it is the property of nature, and of natural and finite agents, to work the unfashioned or confused matter into some determinate form or set kind of being: it is the prerogative of the omnipotent Maker to afford natural agents the entire matter and stuff whereon they work, and to bestow on them such being as they have, whether that be material or immaterial, celestial or sublunary, spiritual or bodily; and to bestow it entirely without the help of any coefficient, without the contribution of any stuff or matter, of any reality preexistent.

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SECTION II.

Of Divine Providence in general: and how Contingency and Necessity in Things created are subject unto it.

CHAP. IX.

Of the perpetual Dependance which all Things created have on the Almighty Creator, both for their Being and their Operations.

1. But will it suffice us to believe, that as art hath its proper subject made or fitted by nature, or as more perfect substances presuppose an imperfect state in nature; so this imperfect state of nature, or the subject on which natural efficients do work, was made of nothing, without any coagency of nature or art, by the sole power of the Almighty Father? To believe all this, is but the first part of our belief of this article of

creation. For better apprehending the entire object of our belief in this point, we are to observe the difference betwixt the dependance which art hath on nature, or which works artificial have on the artificer, or which more perfect natural substances have on the imperfect substances whereof they are made, or on their natural efficients; and the dependance which both natural agents and patients, and which efficient causes, as well artificial as natural, with their several matters or subjects, have on the Almighty Creator and Maker of all things. First, then, nature or causes natural, after they have finished their proper works, and fitted them for art to work upon, do not cooperate with the artificer in fashioning them to his ends or purpose: the artificer again, after he hath finished his work, doth not continually support, preserve, or apply it to those uses unto which it serves, but leaves this unto their care for whose convenience it was made. The clockmaker doth not tie himself to keep all the clocks which he makes; nor doth he which undertakes to keep them bind himself to watch their motions perpetually, or to observe them as curiously as physicians do their sick patients. Again, the most perfect works of nature, as vegetables and living things, depend upon their causes, whether material or efficient, (for the most part,) only in *fieri*, not in *facto*, whilst they are in making or in perfecting, not after they be made and perfected. The lioness doth not perpetually nourish her whelps with her own substance; nor doth the raven continually provide for her young ones; or any other creatures, more kind than they, perpetually support or direct their brood in their motions, but 139
leave them to fend for themselves. If the Almighty Creator should do no better by his most perfect creatures, their return to nothing would be as speedy as

their production from it: all of them have a perpetual and undispensable dependance upon his power, not only whilst they are in making, but as great after they are made: and thus great and perpetual it is, not in respect of their substances only, but as truly in respect of their motions or operations. The imperfect mass or matter whereof bodies natural are made, is not only his sole work, or effect of his omnipotency; but that it is workable or fashionable unto any set form, this likewise is an effect of his operative power; it could not be perpetually thus fashionable but by his perpetual working. That the most perfect natural agent should work or dispose this matter to any set form, this likewise is his work. He doth not only support both agent and patient in that being which he gave them, but doth perpetually cooperate with them in their motions, doth apply and direct their motions unto those ends and uses whereto his wisdom hath ordained them.

2. Concerning the manner of that perpetual dependance which all finite agents with their effects have on the one Omnipotent and Supreme illimited Efficient, whether in respect of their existence or operation, the disputes in schools are intricate, and the questions perplexed: but the best is, the ingenuous reader may quit them, if he will be but pleased to take unto himself, if not an ocular demonstration, yet a visible representation of this truth, in that perpetual dependance which light diffused (whether through the celestial bodies, as the moon or stars, or through the air or other inferior elementary bodies capable of enlightening) hath on the fountain of light, to wit, the body of the sun; or which the light in rooms, otherwise dark, hath on the light of fire or candles by night. So perpetual, so essential is this dependance which light in bodies enlightened by others hath on the bodies which enlighten

them, that some good philosophers[u], from observation of this dependance, have concluded, that *lumen non est inhæsive in corpore illuminato, sed in corpore lucente*, "The lightsomeness which appears in these inferior bodies, or in bodies not lucent in themselves, is not inherently or subjectively in the borrowers, or bodies enlightened, but in the bodies which enlighten them." To prove this conclusion, they use this antecedent—that light borrowed or participated doth follow the motion of the body which bestows or lends it; and this antecedent they think sufficiently proved by sense: for if we hold a looking-glass to a candle by night, the light which for the present appears either in the whole glass, or in some part of it, will alter its place or seat according to the motion of the candle. If you move the candle higher or lower than it was, the light in the glass will remove with it, from the highest place to the lowest, and from the lowest to the highest, as it shall please the mover to alter the aspect betwixt them; so will the light move from one part of the room to another, as the candle is removed; and if you take the candle quite out of the room, the light will follow it, and leave nothing but darkness behind. The same observation holds as true in a dial, in which the light or shadow constantly follows the motion of the sun. But to hold this conclusion, 'that light borrowed from the sun or a candle should be inherently or subjectively in the sun or candle,' is more than true philosophy will warrant, more than the unquestionable truth of the former experiment can logically infer; for though light in bodies not lucent in themselves be not their own, but borrowed, yet in that it is borrowed, it must be truly in the borrower, not in the body which lends it. For

[u] Vide Zabarel. de Lumine.

every one which lends is presumed to transfer the use of what he lends unto him that borrows; the borrower must have the possession of what is lent him during the time of the loan. As for the former experiments, they may be retorted upon such as use their help for inferring this pretended conclusion[x], 'that light diffused is not inherently in the body enlightened, but in the body lucent or enlightening.' For the mutation of the seat of borrowed light, whether in a looking-glass held to a candle, or in a sundial, will be the very same, albeit the candle or dial stand still in the same place; if so we move the looking-glass the same way from the candle, or the dial the same way from the sun, by which the sun did move from the dial, or the candle was moved from the looking-glass. This conclusion is most certain, 'that the motion of light, according to the motion of the body which diffuseth it, doth no way infer the light not to be inherently (according to the inherency which it hath) in the body through which it is diffused, but rather that this light, however inherent in the body enlightened, hath a perpetual indispensable dependance upon the light of the body which produceth it; a dependance on it not only in *fieri*, that is, whilst it is in production, which is in an instant; but a dependance in *facto*, so long as it continues in the body enlightened.' And we cannot better conceive the manner how a line should be made by the continued flux of a point, or a surface by the continued motion of a line, or how time should receive its continuation from the continued flux of an instant, than by observing the manner how light being produced in an instant in the body which borrows it (the extremity of it being terminated to a mathematical point or line) doth vary its place of residence in the same

[x] Vide Anton. Scarmilion. de Coloribus.

body, moving continually from one part to another, according to the degrees of motion, either of the body which gives the light, or of the body which is enlightened, one from the other. If either body could move or be moved from the aspect of the other, in an instant, the light would remove from the body enlightened in the same instant. But moving as it doth, the motion of the light from one part of the same body or room into another is perpetual; there is no interruption in the motion so much as momentary, no interposition of darkness so long as the motion lasts; and yet it is not the same numerical light which thus moveth in the body or room enlightened. There is a continual production of light fully answerable to the continual succession of the motion: the light, whilst in motion, continues no longer the same than the aspect between the body enlightening and enlightened continues the same: and it may be questioned whether there be not a perpetual production of new light, even whilst neither the body enlightening nor enlightened remove one from the other, whilst both stand or rest upon their several centres.

3. But whatever philosophers may dispute one way or other concerning the proper subject of light diffused or participated, or concerning the identity or multiplication of it in bodies not lucent in themselves, but enlightened; the dependance of borrowed or participated light upon the fountain of light, whence it is borrowed, is the most perfect emblem which the eye of man can behold of that dependance which all things numerable, that are or can be, have on the incompre- 141
hensible Essence, or inexhaustible Fountain of being. Whether light participated or diffused have any true inherence or no in bodies enlightened, or whether it be present with them or in them (*ad modum spirita-*

lium) after such a manner as spirits are in sublunary bodies or with them; this is certain, that light participated is not deduced or drawn out of any matter preexistent, or out of any positive quality inherent; it is produced out of darkness or want of light: and herein it is the true emblem of created entities, which were not made of any entities preexistent, but of nothing. As light participated or diffused hath no permanent root in bodies enlightened, so things created have not their root of being in any matter preexistent, nor hath the prime matter, of which things generated are made, any root precedent out of which it groweth. Such being as it hath, it hath entirely by its perpetual dependance upon being itself. The most excellent numerable being that can be imagined is more truly participated or borrowed from being itself, than the light of the moon or stars, than the light in the air, water, or ice is from the body of the sun; and albeit the forms or perfect bodies, which by operation of efficients natural respectively result or are produced out of the matter, have a being distinct from the matter out of which they are made or produced; yet even these have the same immediate dependency upon the incomprehensible Essence, or inexhaustible Fountain of being, which the prime matter hath; as the resplendency or irradiation of coloured glasses, be they yellow, green, or azure, has the same immediate dependance upon the light of the sun, which the light diffused throughout the heavens, water, air, or pure glasses hath: unless the sun send forth his beams upon them, these colours have no resplendency, they cannot affect the sense of sight: nor can any created agent (albeit endowed with qualities operative more forcible and permanent than any coloured glasses can be) produce any real effect without the cooperation or

coagency of the incomprehensible Essence, or inexhaustible Fountain of being. As impossible it is, that any agent should move, or be moved, otherwise than by the virtue of his almighty power, as that it should have being or existence *extra infinitum esse*, "without his infinite being or immensity," or that the continuance of it in such being should not be comprehended in his infinite and interminable duration, which we call eternity. Again, as light borrowed or diffused throughout this inferior world hath a being in its kind distinct from that light which is permanently seated in the fountain of light, on which, notwithstanding, all borrowed light absolutely depends, as being eminently contained in it; so every numerable being or part of this world, the sun, the moon, the stars, the elements, mixed bodies, vegetables, man and beast, have their proper kind of being distinct each from other, and distinct again from the incomprehensible Fountain of being; on which, notwithstanding, all of them have more immediate, more essential dependance than either the lights or different shapes in a glass have on the sun which gives the light, or on the bodies which they represent; and in this incomprehensible Fountain of being, all things, not only which are, but which possibly may be, are more eminently contained, than the least sparkles or portions of borrowed light which appear in broken glasses are in the body of the sun.

4. In this point only, or in this especially, is the production of light in this inferior world by the sun unlike the creation of all things by the Almighty 142
Father of lights, in that the sun produceth light or resplendency without any free choice or intelligence, but by a necessity of nature; that is, it so produceth light, as it hath no power not to produce it. So doth

not the Almighty Father either create the things that are, or preserve them in their estate of being, or co-operate with them in the production of such effects as they in their several kinds and ranks are truly said to produce; for albeit the Almighty Father be more immutable than the sun, yet is he immutably free; for freedom of will, by which creatures rational exceed all creatures merely natural, or capable of no better endowment than sense, being a true and real branch of being, a perfection of the most perfect creatures, must be as truly and really, though in an eminent manner, contained in the Maker of all things, as any other branch of numerable being is. Now the object of this freedom of will in the omnipotent Maker is not only the creation or not creation of things that are or may be, not the preservation or destruction of things created, or of the several endowments or qualifications; but part of this object of divine freedom is the enabling or inhibiting of all his creatures to exercise those qualities or faculties which are to them most natural, and in their kind most powerful. Albeit Nebuchadnezzar had power to make the flames of intended persecution much hotter than any ordinary fire, though other tyrants might have power to make the like again much hotter than he did, or to environ God's saints with the fire of hell, yet if the Almighty Creator withdraw the influence of his power from such fire or flames, they can have no more power to burn or scorch his servants than they have to cool them, although we suppose their nature and qualities to be preserved still entire by the same power by which they were created; for as but now was said, the inhibition or enabling of natural qualities or faculties to exercise their native force is as truly the object of divine freedom as the preservation or destruction of

the agents themselves, with their qualities or endowments, is. For the same reason, the sun was no way wounded in its substance, nor hurt, nor tainted in its influence or other quality, when, by the Divine Power, which is immutably and perpetually free, it was inhibited in its course or motion.

5. That the Almighty Creator neither in our time nor in the times long before us hath laid any such restraint upon the sun that it should not move, or upon the fire that it should not burn, is not from any restraint which he hath laid upon his power by his eternal decree, but from his immutable and eternal freedom. We may not say that he cannot, for the times present or which are to come, lay the like inhibition upon the sun, upon the fire, or upon other celestial or sublunary bodies, for exercising the functions most natural to them; that he will not, at any time, lay the like restraint upon them, we are not bound to believe, until thus much be by his word revealed unto us. That God cannot at this time bring such a general inundation upon the earth as he did in the days of Noah, we may not say or think; but that he will not destroy the world by water we must believe, because we have his solemn promise to this purpose sealed unto us by the sign of the bow in the cloud; but when the iniquity of this present world shall come unto the same height and measure which the old world had made up, we believe he will destroy it by fire: for other mutations in the course of nature, the condition or exigence of times ensuing may be 143
such, as that they may be as strange and miraculous as at any time heretofore they have been. The not interposing of miracles in these our days proceeds not from any act passed by the Almighty to the contrary, nor from the unchangeableness of his eternal will, but

from the condition or course which his creatures hold *de facto*, whose condition or estate is in itself, and by his almighty will so to have it, so changeable and so improvable to different purposes, that many events which to our observation would be most strange might upon special occasions be produced without any change or alteration in his power, whose exercise *ad extra*, that is, in respect of effects producible in the creature, is immutably free, until he promise to inhibit them, as he hath done the general inundation: and although he be most immutable in all his promises or inhibitions, yet doth not every promise or inhibition which he makes induce an absolute immutability or necessity of the things promised or inhibited; their immutability or necessity is the proper effect of his more solemn or peculiar promises. Nor are such inhibitions as he hath set unto the water absolutely necessary from eternity, but grow necessary in revolution of time by the changeable condition of the creature. And albeit we can neither prescribe limits to his will, nor conceive any reason of the mutations which fall out in the creatures by his inhibition, by his permission, or by his positive enabling them to exercise their native functions, yet of the least mutation that can fall out in the world he knows a cause or reason; nor doth he suffer any thing to be done for which his immutable freedom in governing the world hath not an eternal rule or reason, infinitely more perfect than the wisest man living can give any for his best acts or undertakings. But suppose the sun to have that freedom of power in the emission or not emission of its beams which men have over their breath, or that dexterity in tempering or moderating its light or influence which skilful musicians have in modulating their voices, and the former representation of that power which God hath

over all his creatures, and of their dependance on him in their beings and operations, by the dependance which light hath on the sun, would be more lively and full.

6. But the psalmist hath made choice of that free power which man hath over his animal faculties, (as over his breath or operation of his senses,) as the fairest picture of God's free power creative and providence over his creatures: *These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.* Psalm civ. 27, &c. Yet even in these and the like emblematical expressions of the Creator's free power over his creatures, or in the choicest that can be taken or gathered out of the prophetical descriptions, from the exercise of men's free and purest thoughts, there will still remain this disparity—we cannot alter the objects of our intellectual or abstract contemplations without some alteration or change of acts. It is, then, the prerogative of the Almighty freely to will things most contrary and different, without any diversity in his 144
will; and this his free will not only worketh greater variety or change in the creature than the wits of all men in the world can conceive, but withal irresistibly determines the issue of every possible change, without any shadow of change or alteration in his thoughts or resolutions, which in him are not many, but more

truly one infinity than any one thought in us is one. This disparity between the identity of his eternal knowledge and of his immutable freedom, and the manner of our understanding or intellectual choice, I cannot yet better represent than by the former disparity between the circle and many-sided figures[y]. Man's purest intellectual thoughts or actual choices are in the contemplative part of the soul as angles are in many-sided figures, all as different each from other as one angle is from another in a quadrangle; and every one is as distinct from the substance of the soul wherein they are, as angles in a quadrangle are from the sides or surface of it: but those which we term or conceive as several acts or exercises of the Divine Power—as the act of creation, the act of preservation, the act of conservation, the production of miracles, &c.—are in the Almighty not so much distinct one from another, or from his incomprehensible essence, as the angles in a circle are from the sides or from the circumference, which notwithstanding is a totangle, in which there is no sensible distinction between sides and angles, albeit both of them be truly contained in the circumference, as all power and freedom of power is contained in the immutable, infinite, and incomprehensible Essence.

[y] See above, p. 203, &c.

CHAP. X.

The usual and daily Operations of natural Causes, with their several Events or Successes, are as immediately ascribed to the Creator by the Prophets, as the first Creation of all Things, with the Reasons why they are so ascribed.

1. FROM the forementioned hundred and fourth Psalm, which is no other than a sweet paraphrase upon the six days' work of creation, and from the like prophetical emblazoning of God's glory, which amounts from consideration of his works, the intelligent reader will inform himself, that the continual rising and setting of the sun and moon, their incessant diffusion of light through this visible world; the perpetual ascent of springing waters into the hills, their continual decursion from them into the sea; the limitation of the sea's ebbing and flowing; the daily growth of plants and vegetables; the motion of living things on the earth and in the waters, are as immediately and as entirely ascribed unto the operative power of the Creator, as their first creation out of nothing was: yet the reason of their ascribing all this unto the immediate and sole power of God will no way warrant the truth of their criticism who teach, that neither the fire doth truly heat or burn, or the water really cool or moisten, or that no visible creature hath any real operation upon another, but that our assigning of their motions or operations as true causes, in their kind, of the effects which we see daily produced, is but a sole-
cism of *vain philosophy*, or of *sciences falsely so called;* whereas the right resolution of this solecism into distinct and Christian phrase is but this—God doth produce heat, cold, moisture, vegetables, and other living things, (*ad præsentiam creaturarum,*) the fire, water,

sun, earth, &c. being but bare witnesses of the Creator's power which is manifested in them, or of its operation in their presence, by which operation alone all those effects are produced which the philosophers ascribe unto the creatures. And most true it is, that the Creator doth daily work all those effects which we attribute to natural agents; yet doth he not work such effects only in them, or where they are present, but he truly worketh by them and with them: and if the Omnipotent Power be truly said to work by and with natural means or causes, they must truly work with him in their kind. When the apostle saith, *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, this necessarily implies that we have a life in its kind distinct from his life, a motive power different in its kind from his power, a kind of being likewise distinct from his infinite essence, or from being itself. But inasmuch as the life of all things living, the motions of every thing that moveth, the being of every numerable thing that is, hath such an absolute dependance as hath been declared upon his creative power, hence it is that the prophets and divine philosophers ascribe all the visible effects or events, which time presents or place accompanieth, no less entirely to the Creator than the first production of their visible and natural causes. As for the former critics, in whose language God only worketh in his creatures, or (his creatures being present) they might with as good reason affirm that the sun did not really move, but that God did move, the sun being present; yet could he not move or create motion *ad præsentiam solis*, unless the sun did truly move. The truth is, the sun doth move or is moved by God's presence in it, but he doth not move with it or by it; but with the sun or other creatures he truly worketh, as they truly work with

him. And by this concession of some true power and property of working unto natural agents, more is ascribed to the Creator of all things than can be ascribed by the contrary opinion, which utterly denies all power or property of working to the creatures; for he that denies any effects to be truly wrought by them cannot ascribe their abilities or operative force (which in his opinion is none) unto their Creator. But [z] Moses taught the Israelites that it was God which gave them power to gather substance; nor were they more bound to praise God for the substance which they gathered, or for the manna which by miracle he sent unto them, than for the power which he gave them to gather the one or other.

2. Yet is not this absolute and immediate dependance which every creature, as well for its being as for its power or exercise of it, hath on the Almighty Creator, the entire ground or reason why the effects which are, in their kind, produced by the creatures, are by the prophets wholly ascribed unto power almighty: for this dependance, or the reason of ascribing all things to God which is grounded on it, being for the present sequestered, he hath a peculiar title to all the works or effects (especially to all 146
of greater and more public consequence) which the creatures produce, from his skill or wisdom in contriving the combination of second causes, with their several operations, for the assecution of their last or utmost end. Nor was the entitative goodness of every

[z] Deut. viii. 16, 17, 18. "Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; and (lest) thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."

creature in his kind, albeit considered in that perfection wherein God made it, the ground or reason of that approbation which he bestowed upon them, as they severally began to be, or after he had accomplished them all. *God* (saith Moses) *saw all that he had made, and, lo, it was exceeding good.* What goodness then was this which he thus commends? The goodness of order or of harmony betwixt them, as they were parts of this universe. This harmony was the accomplishment of his several works, the ground of his praises, and the complete object of our belief of this article of creation. Hence saith the apostle, (Heb. xi.) *By faith we believe*—what? *Secula facta esse;* nay, more than so, καταρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας, *that the worlds were harmonically made.* It was a double oversight in some good divines, from one or both of these two principles, (*Omne ens qua ens, est bonum,*) 'Whatsoever hath being is good;' 'Whatsoever is, was made by God, and all things which God made were good,' to infer, that sin, or moral evil, could have no positive entity; for the greater the entitative goodness of any creature is, the greater measure of moral evil it always includes, unless its entitative goodness hold such harmony or correspondency with the rest as may help to make up or support that goodness of order, that is, that goodness of coordination amongst themselves, or of that joint subordination unto their Creator, which he first framed and placed in this universe, as it was his work. Unless sin, or moral evil, had some positive entity, or some positive degrees or measure, all sins should be equal, there could be no different kinds of sin, no numerical difference or degrees betwixt particular sins of the same kind. But of the nature of sin or moral evil, and how compatible this evil is with goodness entitative, more at large, by

God's assistance, in the treatise of Original Sin, or the estate or condition of the sons of wrath, which estate every child of Adam, by participation of this first sin, doth inherit. The peculiar title which the Almighty Creator by right of creation, or by the combination or contrivance of natural and intellectual agents, hath to all the praises which either the soldier or statesman [a], the landlord, the husbandman, or such as live by merchandising, daily rob him of, will come more fitly to be declared in some following treatise of Divine special Providence.

3. If the reader desire a brief abstract or sum of what hath been said of God's power in creating the world, or of the reservation of this free power unto himself, to alter, to innovate, or amend the estate wherein he hath hitherto preserved it, I cannot exhibit this general view more clearly or more succinctly than Justin Martyr hath done in his answer to the fourth question of the Grecians. The question was thus proposed: *An Deus faciat, feceritve, facturusve sit: et si facit, suaptene voluntate, an præter voluntatem?* "Whether God do make the things that are, whether he hath made the things that have been, whether he will make other things which yet are not, or the things which are, after a better manner than as yet they have been made? or if he be or hath been a maker, or continue to make things better, whether he do all this out of his own free will, or besides his will?" His full answer to this question is, *Fecit* 147
Deus, et facit, et facturus est, suapte sponte et voluntate: nam creaturam ipse condidit, quæ antehac non fuerat, volens. Eam providentia sua in eo ut sit,

[a] Vide Salvianum, lib. 7. num. 227. A passage to this effect occurs, lib. iii. p. 59. of Baluzius's edition, 1669; or Bibl. Patr. Par. 1575. tom. iii. num. 277.

conservat: quod quidem est facit. *Quam etiam instauraturus est, et in statum meliorem redacturus per restitutionem sive renovationem: quod est* facturus est: *ut repurget eam ab absurditate omni, ex rationalium ignavia contracta. Non quod per judicii considerationem et deliberationem posterius id quod melius sit, invenerit; sed quod longe antea et prius quam mundum condidit, constitutum habuerit ut faceret. Neque enim possibile est ut vel ad notionem vel ad potentiam, Deo posterius quidquam accedat, quod prius non habuerit. Volentem autem Deum mundum creasse, illud est documento, quod cum Deus potuerit plures efficere soles, non plures, sed unum duntaxat effecerit. Nam qui plures non potest condere soles, neque unum condere potest: et qui unum solem creare potuit, necessario quoque plures creare potuit. Quomodo igitur quos facere potuit plures soles, Deus non fecit, nisi certe quod plures soles facere noluit? Sin quos non fecit soles, voluntate non fecit: perspicuum ntique fuerit, eum etiam quem fecit, voluntate fecisse. Et veluti sol, ita et reliquæ creaturæ partes omnes, quæ vel obnoxiæ vel non obnoxiæ sunt corruptibilitati, ex voluntate Dei et id quod sint, et id quod hujusmodi sint, habent.*

CHAP. XI.

Containing the Sum of what we are to believe in this Article of Creation, and of the Duties whereto it binds us; with an Introduction to the Article of His Providence.

1. To believe that God is the maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, includes in it an acknowledgment not only of the six days' work, but that he still makes all things that are, and shall make all things which hereafter shall be. So

long as any thing which hath been continues in being, so long as any thing which now is not shall begin or not cease to be, so long the Almighty continues a Maker; and inasmuch as some things which are made, or which hereafter shall be made, shall have no end, he continues an everlasting Maker. This title of Maker is none of his eternal attributes, but a denomination ascribed unto him from his works, which all had their beginning in time, or rather with time, or with duration finite or numerable: it is an everlasting attribute, for that properly is everlasting which though it have beginning, yet it hath no end. But albeit the acts or exercises of his will or power had a beginning with the world, (for they are always in the creature or effect,) yet his will and purpose to make the world are eternal; so is the power by which he made it, so is the combination of all these, to wit, his providence, by which he orders and governs all things, coeternal to his essence. All modern controversies, to my knowledge, account it an heathenish solecism to say, 'God only did make or hath made the world and all things in it, he doth not now make them:' for this were to deny the necessity of his everlasting work in preserving, supporting, and continuing all things in their proper being; and to deny this, would be more than a solecism of speech, a real branch of infidelity. Is it, then, a less solecism of speech to say, or a smaller 148
portion of infidelity to think, that God only hath decreed before all times what shall fall out in time, but doth not now decree, nor shall any thing hereafter be decreed by him? Questionless, if his decree be coeternal to his power, the same with his will or purpose, if he cease not to work or will, he ceaseth not to work or decree. He did decree to work when he did not work, or produce any effect *ad extra*, but

he never produced any effect or work when he did not decree: for he *worketh all things by the counsel of his will*, not by the counsel of his will as past and ended, but by the counsel of his will which was, which is, and which is to come: and he decreeth all things for the times present after the selfsame manner that he decreed them from eternity; otherwise his decree were not eternal, could have no resemblance of eternity. To infer that God's decree is an act past, or that God doth not now decree, because he hath decreed all things before all worlds, is a solecism or ignorance, to say no worse, of the same nature, quality, and scantling, as if you should say, 'God was before the world was, therefore God is not since the world was, nor shall be after the end of this world;' for the world could neither begin, continue, nor cease to be, but by his eternal and irresistible decree, which neither hath beginning nor end, nor can admit any interposition of change. It is true, that if we consider the Deity in himself, or his decree as it is in him, or the same with him, there is neither *præteritum* nor *futurum*, no such difference in them as we character or notify by these terms *past* or *to come;* yet if we consider God or his eternal decree as they include a reference of precedency to things temporal, past or to come, or as times current have coexistence with him, we may not deny that God was before all times, and did decree things to come; that he is in all times current, and doth decree the issue of times present or ensuing. Thus in all times and in all places the Almighty Father is present with us, present in us, as our Maker and Preserver, present by his eternal providence to order and govern us; and the government of the world, specially of men and angels, is in true divinity the proper object of the eternal decree: and if God be thus with us,

nothing can go amiss with us, save only by our ignorance, by our misbelief or weak belief of this first article.

2. The true, that is, the firm and sound belief of every moral or sacred truth, specially of such fundamental truths as are contained in this article, always includes a correspondency in the believer unto the thing believed; and this correspondency must have its place, not in the brain or apprehensive faculty only, but in the affection. The sympathy of affection unto the thing believed results from the impression which the speculative form or representation in the brain makes upon the heart, which is the seat of the affection. The means subordinate to the Spirit of God for making this impression are two—a right explication or branching of the article or object to be believed; and a serious and frequent meditation upon the object rightly branched, or a taking, not of the truth only, but the consequences of it, into deep and settled consideration, or, as we say, a laying of both to heart. The main branches of this article are three: first, that God is the maker of all men that are, not of Adam only; secondly, that he is the preserver of all; thirdly, that he perpetually ordereth and governeth all things, even the thoughts of men, by the irresistible uncessant working of his omnipotent decree or will. 149 In our belief of the two first branches, (be it less or more, weak or strong,) so it be uniform, it is essentially included that God is good to all, in that he hath given life and being unto all. Of this his goodness no man can want store of witnesses, so long as either he enjoys himself or the necessary supplies of life. One special duty, whereunto the belief of this article doth immediately bind all men, is expressly commended to us by our Saviour, Matt. vi.; the general

neglect whereof is more than sufficient to condemn, not the heathens or infidels only, but the greatest part of such as profess the Christian faith, of infidelity: *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* It is a sin for him which believes that God hath given him that life and being which he hath, not to believe that God did give him both for his greater good, or that he will not increase his blessings upon him, so he do not distrust his fatherly care and providence; a greater sin it is to suspect or question whether God have not a more fatherly care over all men than he hath over other creatures. So our Saviour adds: *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?* In that God hath given man a better kind of life and being than the fowls of the air, this is an undoubted pledge unto all, that he hath prepared far better food for them than for birds and beasts, an everlasting food, so they do not distrust his providence; and as he provideth better food for man than for beast, so hath he better raiment for them in store than he hath for vegetables, so they will seek it from him, and not be their own carvers. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?* That to dis-

trust God's providence or doubt of his love—of such love as is ready to bestow better raiment upon them than Solomon in all his royalty had—is a point of infidelity, is included in our Saviour's inference or conclusion, *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?* (*for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:*) *for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* Is it then unlawful to make any thing which the Gentiles sought after any part of our care? No: the Gentiles, after their fashion, sought after God, who (as the apostle saith) *giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*, even to the Gentiles, *that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him*, Acts xvii. 25, 27. The only reason why they did not find him was because they sought him amiss; and the reason why they sought him amiss was their ignorance of this truth which our Saviour and St. Paul hath taught, to wit, that God did give the very Gentiles themselves food and raiment, with other necessaries of life, even life itself, with all its contentments, to the end that they might seek him and taste his goodness; but they ran counter, and sought only after those things which were good, not in themselves, but as they were pledges of his goodness. And the more eagerly they thus sought after 150
these temporal good things, the further they ran from the Fountain of goodness, which alone must sweeten the best things we can desire, and season our souls for the right entertainment or fruition of them.

3. Our speculative assent unto this article, or approbation of this truth, whereof these Gentiles were ignorant, will rather aggravate than mitigate our Saviour's censure of them, if we be as greedy seekers after the

necessities of life, or as solicitous hunters after superfluities, as the Gentiles were. The distinctions or divisions of care, with annotations what kind of care is by our Saviour forbidden, what allowed of, are easy to be found, almost in every writer, especially in the expositors of that sixth chapter of Matthew; but, whether through the default of hearers or of teachers, or respectively of both, too much liberty is every where taken for employing the greatest part of men's times and endeavours in providing things of this life. Notwithstanding all the prohibitions which have been given by our Saviour to the contrary, covetousness and ambition, the two grand enemies of belief in God and his loving providence, have nowhere in any age thriven better than amongst zealous Christian professors in these later times; and—which is most to be lamented—scripture is secretly opposed to scripture for justifying or countenancing unchristian care of worldly matters. The warrant which many take to themselves from the mistaken sense of one place in St. Paul [b], *He that provideth not for his family is worse than an infidel*, is used as a countermand to our Saviour's prohibition; for the right limitation whereof, the only caveat which I have to commend unto the reader is this: as St. Paul, how mightily soever he debase works, (not ceremonial only, but moral,) doth never deny their use or necessity, either for attaining to justification, or for making our election sure, but only seeks to strengthen our reliance upon God's mercies in Christ by denial of ourselves, and of the best works which we can do, whether before regeneration or after; so our Saviour, albeit he seem universally to forbid all care of minding temporal contentments, yet

[b] 1 Tim. v. 8.

in deed and real meaning forbids us only to place any part of our hopes or confidence in our own endeavours. He doth not simply forbid all care of things temporal, but so far only as it is an hinderance to our care and watchfulness for trying and tasting the goodness of God, or as it weakens our reliance upon his fatherly providence. If we be watchful in prayer, and frequent in meditations upon God's goodness already experienced, our care of heavenly things and estimate of God's goodness will better teach every one of us in his several calling the right limitation of his domestic cares, than any general rule which can be gathered from the nature, quality, or quantity of cares. For conclusion, he which forbids us to take care for the morrow commands us this day to pray for to-morrow's bread; that is, to pray every day for the good success or blessings of the days following, with all attention and watchfulness.

4. Another fundamental duty, and one of the most formal effects of faith, as it respects this article, is that of the preacher, Eccles. xii. 1: *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* But why is this duty in particular pressed upon youth? Because the prints of God's creative power are then most fresh in our nature, and might transmit a fairer copy or truer estimate of the Creator's goodness unto old age than old age can take any; so young men, by often reflect- 151
ing upon the present comforts of health and strength, upon the activity of body, the quickness of sense and spirit, would engross them deeply in their memories. Youth, then, is the fittest season for estimating the benefits of creation, and old age the choicest time for surveying our unthankfulness to our Creator. If the former contentments of youth, with the comforts which accompany our best thoughts and actions, were truly

calculated in our fresh and choicest days, and rightly weighed upon their proper centre, our thankfulness would reciprocate upon the fountain from which they flow, and be turned to their Donor in a measure equiponderent to their weight upon our souls. And nothing but want of thankfulness, in such as have tasted the ordinary benefits of creation, can hinder the descent of God's choice of blessings in great abundance. Would we but sequester that delight which we take in health and strength from ourselves, and surrender it wholly into his hands that gave it, he is still ready to renew and better our present and former estate. Did we empty our hearts of pride, of self-delight, or complacency, by pouring forth such joyful thanksgiving as the psalmist doth, *It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;* it is he that gives us all those good things wherein we joy, we did not receive them from our friends or parents, we cannot take them to ourselves; the same Lord, as the psalmist elsewhere avoucheth, would give us our hearts' desire, even fill our hearts with joy and gladness which shall never fail or decrease. This is his sole and proper gift; for though we could take unto ourselves all the temporary contentments of transitory pleasures which either our hearts could wish or our inventions calculate, yet should we not have our hearts' desire so long as we fix our delight either in the things enjoyed or in the enjoying of them, and not in the Lord which gave them unto us, and us power to enjoy them.

From thus delighting in the Lord, or from rendering according to the benefits bestowed upon us, the general withdrawments are but two: first, an overprizing of such externals as procure or increase our contentments; secondly, an overvaluing the fear or dread of men's persons, or other externals which seem

to menace disgrace, vexation, or torment unto us, if we should do as in our calmest thoughts we often desire to do. The sinister sway of both temptations or withdrawments from the duties commended unto us cannot be otherwise counterpoised, than by taking the last branch of this article into deep and serious consideration. The last branch was, that God doth not only make and preserve us, but doth withal perpetually order, direct, and govern both us and all the externals which we love or fear, by his all-seeing, ever-working decree or counsel. If our souls or senses have for once or twice been overjoyed with the possession of any externals or instrumental causes of contentment, let us call to mind, that as the almighty Creator gives both us and them their being, so he likewise stints and limits as well their operations as our capacities to receive their impressions at his pleasure. The same externals which formerly wrought our comfort or contentments may procure our grief and misery by too much or unseasonable familiarity with them, or fruition of them. If, in fear or dread of evil menaced by man, or represented to us by fire, by sword, or other unruly instruments of wrath or vengeance, we cannot hope that the almighty Creator will by miracle abate their strength, or inhibit the exercise of their native qualities or dispositions, as he 152
did in Daniel and the three children's cases; yet, unless our faith in the last branch of this article fail, it will confirm us in this resolution, that he can and will so contrive the concurrence of hurtful agents as they shall become instruments of greater good to such as love him, and in temptations adhere unto him. The rule or maxim is universally true, 'No agent or instrument, whether of temporal harm or comfort, whether of joy or grief, can work any other ways, or

any further, than he by his eternal decree or providence hath appointed it for the present to work; and in that promise made unto us by our apostle, *that he will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength*, it is included that he will so restrain or abate the force and efficacy of all second causes, as they shall not conquer our patience or quell the comfort of our unwounded conscience.

CHAP. XII.

Though Nothing can fall out otherwise than God hath decreed, yet God hath decreed that many Things may fall out otherwise than they do.

1. MEN, otherwise of light and vain behaviour, gain oftentimes respect amongst the multitude by pretended descent from worthy families with whom their names have some alliance: so do inconsiderate positions or conclusions, dangerously erroneous, many times get more esteem among the learned than ordinary truths do, as being mistaken for the true and natural offsprings of undoubted maxims. There is no Christian but thinks himself bound upon his allegiance to submit his assent unto the former principle, 'It is impossible that any thing should be which God hath decreed not to be, or any thing which is should otherwise be than God hath decreed it should be;' and many, which make a conscience as well of their words as of their ways, (herein perhaps especially faulty, that they are too zealously solicitous not to speak amiss,) make no scruple of entertaining these and the like inferences following, as naturally descending from the former maxim: 'It is impossible aught should fall out otherwise than it doth; all things in respect of God and his omnipotent decree are necessary; con-

tingency is but a solecism of secular language, or if any thing may without offence be termed contingent, it must be reputed such only with reference to second causes.'

2. Howbeit, such good men as do thus write and speak will give us leave (I know) to take it in the first place as granted, that God is wiser than we are, and knows the nature of all things and their differences better than they or we do. This being granted, we will in the second place suppose that contingency is not a mere fictitious name of that which is not, as Tragelaphus, nor altogether synonymal to necessity. The question about contingency, and of its difference from necessity, is not such as one in merriment once proposed in schools; *An chimera calcitrans in vacuo terat calceos:* the very names of *contingency* and *necessity* to ordinary Latinists differ more than *ensis* and *gladius*, than *vestis* and *indumentum*, betwixt which perhaps the ancient Latin artificers or nomen- 153
clators knew some difference: yet was it impossible for them to know any thing which God knew not, who, out of all controversy, knows the true difference between contingency and necessity much better than we can do: for both of them are entities of his making, and serve as different laws to the diversity of his creatures, or their different actions. All the reasons that can be drawn from the immutability of God's decree to the contrary, may with greater facility and strength of the same decree be retorted than brought against us: for God immutably decrees mutability. Now who will say that things mutable are in respect of God's decree or knowledge immutable? The heavens and other bodies movable, according to local motion, are truly movable in themselves, absolutely movable, not immovable in respect of God's decree or knowledge: for

he knows them to be movable, because he decreed them so to be; he doth not know them to be immovable because he decreed them not to be such, unless for a time by interposition of miracle. It implies less contradiction to say, *Deus immutabiliter decernit mutabilia,* than to say, (which hath been accounted an ancient orthodoxal maxim,) *Stabilis dat cuncta movere;* for mobility is a branch of mutability.

In what good sense all things may be said necessary in respect of God's decree. See chap. xxii. parag. 2.

3. Every thing in respect of God's decree or knowledge is altogether such as God hath decreed it should be. If then God hath decreed there should be contingency as well as necessity, it is altogether as necessary that some events should be contingent as others necessary, and as truly contingent as the other is necessary in respect of God's decree. Albeit to speak properly, the natures of contingency and necessity consist not in mere relation or respect. For inasmuch as both are immediate and real effects of Divine Omnipotency, both must have absolute being, the being of neither is merely relative. Now if contingency have a true and absolute being, it is neither constituted in the nature of contingency by any respect or relation to second causes, nor can any respect or relation to the First Cause deprive it of that absolute nature which the omnipotent efficacy of the Cause of causes hath irrevocably bestowed upon it. Briefly, if contingency be any thing, it is that which it is by the omnipotent decree; and being such, it is altogether as impossible that some effects should not be absolutely contingent, as that such effects as the Divine decree hath appointed to be necessary should not be at all. Or, if we would make impartial inquiry into the original of all things, nothing without the precincts of the most glorious and ever blessed Trinity is absolutely necessary.

4. By contingency (lest haply we might be mistaken) we understand the possible mean between necessity of being and necessity of not being, or of being such or of not being such, or between necessity of doing and necessity of not doing, or necessity of being done or necessity of being left undone. This mean, between necessity of doing and necessity of not doing, is that which in agents intellectual, as in men and angels, we call freedom of will or choice; unto which freedom necessity is as contradictory as irrationability is to the nature of man, and contingency as necessarily presupposed as life and sense are to reason: add reason to contingency, and we have the complete definition of freewill. In those cases wherein the Creator hath exempted man from restraint of necessity his will is free. The divine will itself is not free in those operations which are essential, though most delectable. 154
God the Father is more delighted in the eternal generation of his Son, so is God the Father and the Son in the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost, than in the creation, production, or preservation of all the creatures. Yet are not these or other internal operations of the blessed Trinity so free in respect of the Divine Nature, as is the production of the world. Whatsoever God decrees, he decrees it freely, that is, so as he might not decree it. Whatsoever he makes, he makes it freely, that is, he so makes it, as that it was not necessary for him to make it.

CHAP. XIII.

Contingency is absolutely possible, and Part of the Object of Omnipotency, as formal a Part as Necessity is.

1. It is an unquestionable rule in the art of arts, that propositions, for their form not incompatible, may, from the necessity of their matter or subject, become

equivalent to propositions directly contradictory, whose indispensable law or rule it is, that if the one be true, the other must needs be false—they admit of no mean betwixt them. Now there is no matter or subject in the world which is so absolutely necessary as the existence of the Divine Nature, or the internal operations of the Trinity: whence it is, that between these two propositions, 'The generation of the Son is necessary'—'The not generation of the Son is necessary,' there is no possible mean which can be capable of truth: the first is so absolutely necessary, and so necessarily true, that the latter is eternally false. But such is not the case or condition of these two propositions following: 'The creation or existence of the world is necessary'—'The not creation or nonexistence of the world is necessary.' These are not contradictories for their form, nor equivalent to contradictories for their matter or subject, and therefore may admit a mean between them. To say 'The creation or existence of the world was absolutely necessary,' hath no truth in it; for it had a beginning of existence and being, and may have an end; and the other extreme or contrary, 'The not creation or nonexistence of the world is absolutely necessary,' hath less appearance of truth in it. It remains then that the two contradictory propositions to these false ones must be true. The contradictory to the former is this: 'The creation or existence of the world is not absolutely necessary.' The contradictory to the latter is this: 'The not creation or nonexistence of the world is not absolutely necessary.' Now seeing the world is created, and yet it was not necessary that it should be created, both these propositions following (seeing either of them is a true mean between the two former extremes or false ones) are most true: 1. 'The creation of the world was pos-

sible;' 2. 'The not creation of the world was possible.' And if as well the not creation as the creation of the world was possible, we may not deny that God did freely create it, seeing freedom properly taken includes, or is a possibility of, doing or not doing. It was likewise free for the Almighty to create or not to create man or angel; but his free purpose to create them after his own image being supposed, it was not 155
merely possible, but altogether necessary, that they should be created good: inasmuch as he is goodness itself, it is not possible that evil should be created by him, that he should be the author of it: as is his being, so is his goodness, perpetually absolute, eternally necessary. But though men and angels were necessarily created good, yet their goodness in the beginning was mutable, not perpetually necessary. The question is, whether continuance in that goodness wherein God created them were truly possible, in respect of God's decree, unto such as have not so continued, or their noncontinuance necessary; or whether neither their continuance or noncontinuance were necessary, or both alike possible. To say that Adam's continuance in goodness was, in respect of God's decree, necessary, is evidently convinced of falsehood by his fall: so that the other part only remains questionable; whether Adam's noncontinuance in the state of goodness were so absolutely decreed by God, that it was not possible for him to continue. For resolution of this point, we are to inquire, first, whether, in respect of God's power, it were possible; secondly, whether, in respect of his goodness, it were necessary, or most congruent, to ordain or decree neither a necessity of continuance nor a necessity of noncontinuance in goodness, but the mean between them, that is, an absolute possibility of continuance and an absolute possibility of noncon-

tinuance. That it was possible to decree such a mutual possibility may thus be proved:

2. Whatsoever implies no contradiction is absolutely possible, and falls within the object of omnipotency: but this mixed possibility of continuing or not continuing, being a mean betwixt the necessity of Adam's continuance and the necessity of not continuance in the state of integrity, implies no contradiction; *ergo*, it was possible for God to decree it. That it implies no contradiction in respect of the form, is a point so clear from the first principles of argumentation, that he which understands not this, is neither fit to dispute nor to be disputed with; but the same form (notwithstanding) of contrariety applied to the Divine Nature, the Persons in Trinity, or their internal operations, admits no mean. What is the reason? The nature and attributes of the Deity are absolutely necessary, and precedent to all Divine decrees or effects of God's power; and it implies a contradiction, that any thing which is absolutely necessary should admit any mixture of contingency, or of possibility of the contrary: but the nature, state, condition, or existence of man, are not proper objects of the Divine decree, yet proper effects of his power, and being such, they are not absolutely necessary; and not being necessary in themselves, they cannot encumber or involve propositions, for their form, not necessary with absolute necessity. Whatsoever had a true possibility of being before it was, may be actually such as it was absolutely possible for it to be, or such as it might please the Almighty Creator (who is free in all his actions *ad extra*) to make it. It was possible for him to make man's goodness, or his continuance in it, not to be necessary, but contingent. He that made man of nothing, had nothing to resist or hinder him from squaring or framing

his nature to that abstract form of truth which was in itself, or (as we say) objectively possible. For absolute omnipotency includes an ability to engross or fill mere logical possibilities with true and physical substances or qualities, as truly answerable unto them as natural bodies are to bodies mathematical. But 156
concerning God's power to decree an absolute contingency in the state, condition, or actions of men, there can be no question among such as grant his omnipotency to be out of question. What could necessitate his will to lay a necessity of sinning upon Adam, whose fall, or first sin, if it were necessary in respect of God's decree, the necessity must needs proceed from God's omnipotent decree, without which nothing can have any real possibility or true title of being, much less a necessity of being; for Divine omnipotency is the first and sole foundation of all being: otherwise than by it and from it nothing can come to pass either necessarily or contingently.

3. Whatsoever is and hath not been, must of necessity have some cause of now being; and as is the event or effect, such must the causality be. If the one be necessary or inevitable, it is impossible the other should be contingent, or merely possible; both or neither must be necessary. Man we suppose did once stand upright; his first sin or fall, that action, whatsoever it were, which brought him down, the evils which thence ensued, are not mere nothing: evil itself got some kind of being by his negligence which from the beginning it had not. Of all or any of these, the question still revolves, whether they were necessary or not necessary, but contingent. If contingent, we have no more to say, but God's peace be on them which so speak and think; if any reply, that they were necessary, he must assign a necessary cause of their being;

for without some cause they could not be, and without a necessitating cause there was no necessity that they should be. Was this supposed necessity then from man or from God? from any second cause, or from the first Cause of all things? If from man only, or from other second causes, then were they necessary, not in respect of the first Cause, but in respect of the second; that is, some second cause did make them necessary whenas the first Cause had left them free, or merely possible; which to affirm is contrary to their positions with whom we dispute, and in itself unconceivable. For who can make that necessary which God hath made contingent, or subject to change? What can be said then? That God did make man's fall, his first sin or appetite of the forbidden fruit, to be necessary, or necessitate his will in his sinister choices? This were all one as to say, that God were the immediate and necessary cause of sin, of death, of all the evils that have befallen mankind since Adam; for he is the sole immediate and necessary cause of all things which he so decrees as they cannot possibly fall out otherwise: for him to err in decreeing, or for the execution of his decree to be defeated, is impossible. In respect of his proper and adequate object, and peremptorily intended effect, his will is a more irresistible, more powerfully necessitating cause, than any other cause whatsoever. Now if God's will had been to leave no possibility for Adam's perseverance, his fall had been the complete object of God's decree concerning our first estate; and by consequence God's decree or will had been the first cause of sin's first entrance into the world.

CHAP. XIV. 157

The former Conclusion proved by the Consent of all the Ancients, whether Christians or Heathens, which did dislike the Error of the Stoicks.

THE incommodious or inconsiderate speeches which some of better note and antiquity have let fall, were (as I persuade myself) but symptoms of their provoked zeal, or eager desire to salve those gross absurdities which they had rightly espied in others: but it is always more easy to expugn an error, or salve a particular inconvenience, than to provide that no more shall follow upon the cure or medicine. Had those famous lamps of God's church, by whose light many gross opinions have been descried and reformed, seen the inconveniences which follow upon their own positions as clearly as many of their friends since have done, it would be a foul slander in us to suspect that they would not willingly have altered their dialect, or taken advice for expressing their good meaning in terms more safe, more proper, and more scholastick. If otherwise we abstract their speeches from that respect and reverence which we owe unto their memory, or that good opinion which best men have had of their sincerity; I cannot see wherein the necessary consequences of their opinions, as they are usually expressed, come short of the Manichees' errors, or wherein they differ at all from the Stoicks. The Manichees held all evil and mischief in the world to fall out by inevitable necessity; but this necessity they derived from an evil author, from a prime cause or creator of evil only, not of any thing that was good. And better it is (for it is more consonant to our Saviour's advice) to acknowledge the tree for evil where the fruit is evil, than to justify it for good,

when the fruit is apparently and of necessity nought. The pertinacy or stiffness in this common error, 'Evil and mischief, or wicked actions, fall out by necessity,' being presupposed equal, they add less sin or error to it, which hence acknowledge a prime cause of evil, or a cause evil by fatal necessity, than those which hold evil to be necessary in respect of his omnipotent decree who is infinitely good. In fine, the Manichees were gross heretics in holding evil and mischief to fall out by inevitable necessity; but this heresy once admitted, it was rather a consonancy of error than any addition of new heresy, to admit two prime causes or creators, the one of good, the other of evil. They durst not slander goodness with any crime, or for being the author of any thing that was not good; nor were they disposed to flatter greatness, as if evil were no evil because it proceeded from it.

2. That which the ancients reproved in the Stoicks' opinion, as most injurious to God and all good men, was, that they held all things (and evil things amongst the rest) to fall out by fate, or unavoidable necessity: this foundation being once laid, the roots of virtue must utterly perish, and that which we call *vice* should be a mere name, or matter of nothing; there is no place left for just reward or punishment. Whether by *fate* the Stoicks meant the influence of stars, the course of nature, or the decree of God (who to them was all one with nature); all was one in respect of the
158 former inconveniences, which necessarily followed from admission of an inevitable necessity in human actions, whencesoever that be derived. To say it comes from the first cause or from the second, is merely accidental to the error or inconvenience so sharply and justly reproved by the primitive church. In respect of a tradesman's commodity, it is all one whether he be

prohibited for setting up or trafficking by the company of his own profession, or by some higher powers, so the prohibition or restraint be as large and peremptory, without hope of release; or if he be restrained upon his allegiance by the prince or privy-council, his hopes of thriving will be much less than if he were tied only by the local statutes of some petty corporation. Thus if the Stoick derived the necessity of all things from the revolution of the heavens, or from other second causes, as their supposed guides; the impossibility of doing otherwise than we do, was, in every Christian's conceit, evidently much less than if we derive this necessity from the omnipotent decree. Now the danger or inconvenience of their opinion did formally consist in nursing a conceit in men, that it was impossible for them to do otherwise than they do, or to avoid the evils and mischiefs into which they fall; and these dangers or inconveniences are so much greater in Christians than they were in the Stoicks, as the God which we acknowledge is more omnipotent than nature, or the Stoick's god; for the more omnipotent he is, the more impossible is it for any creature to avoid the necessity which by his decree is laid upon him.

3. In respect of the former inconveniences, or of the opinion itself, it is merely accidental, whether this necessity be laid upon us by coaction, or willingly and cheerfully entertained by us; whether it proceed from God's power or impulsion, or from his wisdom; so our actions and their issues be, in respect of his omnipotent power or will, alike unavoidable. If birds and fishes could speak, I suppose the one would as much complain of those that in hard frost or snow allure them with baits to come within the fall of the trap, as the other would do of fishers for driving them vio-

lently into their nets: if the birds once taken be used as hardly, their expostulations would be so much more just, as their usage before their taking was more kind. To make a man willing to undo himself, upon fair promises made, not with purpose to do him good, but to circumvent him, is greater cruelty than can accompany open violence: he that wittingly ministers poison instead of physic, is in all men's judgment as true a murderer as he that kills with the sword, albeit the party to whom it is ministered, having no reason to suspect any danger, do willingly drink it; and the less suspicious or more charitably affected he is to his professed physician, the greater wrong he hath in being thus uncharitably dealt with. It would little boot the malefactor in this kind to plead, 'Albeit I gave it him, he might have chosen whether he would have drunk it, because I did not enforce him with a drawn dagger or other weapon to be his own executioner.' In many cases, one may be the true cause of another's death, and deserve death himself, although he be not any necessary cause of his death, or plot his destruction without possibility of avoidance. But if our willing choice of those ways which lead to death be necessary in respect of the Almighty's decree, so that there be no possibility left to escape it; he is a more necessary and more immediate cause of all their deaths that
159 thus perish, than any man can be of his death whom he poisons; and if the case stood thus with any, their misery were greater by how much they did less suspect his goodness; however, most miserable, because most desperate. Reason and knowledge (the two ornaments of the human nature) should be to them a curse. He that neither knows nor doth his master's will shall be beaten, because it was possible for him to have known it; but with fewer stripes, because, not knowing it,

there was no possibility left for him to do it. But *he that knows it, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*, because the knowledge of his will to punish sinners and reward the righteous did include a possibility to avoid death, and to be made partaker of life: if, otherwise, there be no possibility left for him that knows God's displeasure against sin to avoid the ways of sin (those are death), his case before and after death is much more miserable than his whom God in just judgment hath deprived of knowledge; and the Preserver of men should be accounted much more favourable to stocks and trunks, than unto many men upon whom he bestows his best gifts in great plenty, if these be bestowed upon the conditions now mentioned, or be charged with remediless misery.

4. But admitting their misery to be fatal, and inevitable by Divine decree, is it not possible to acquit this decree, or the author of it, from being the author of evil? Did the Stoick condemn all judges of injustice that sentenced malefactors unto violent death, whereto, by their opinion, all that suffered it were inevitably destinated? Perhaps the fear of censure in public courts did make them silent in this point; but was not this care to keep themselves harmless, or fear not to offend magistrates, altogether fatal? Galen (to my remembrance) in his Stoical discourse, *quod mores animi sequuntur temperamentum corporis*, hath framed this answer to the question proposed: 'We do not offend in killing snakes or toads, or other like venomous creatures, albeit their natural temper or disposition be unalterably harmful unto men: and if nature or temper of body make some of our own stamp and rank more noisome than these creatures are unto their neighbours, to fit the one sort with the same measure of punishment which is due unto the other is no injustice, no

inequality ;' and Lipsius[d], a man not too much abhorrent from any opinion that was fashionable to his new style, or might serve to set forth the point which for the present he much affected, gives this brief *placet* in favour of the Stoick's opinion, *Fatali culpæ fatalis pœna*, " Punishment is fatal to fatal crimes." But this is *principium petere*, to take that for granted which is questioned: for if the harms which malefactors do and suffer be truly fatal, the one is no true crime, the other is no just punishment. To Galen I answer, that if we could, by any skill in physic or complexions, discern some men to be as naturally disposed to mischief all that come in their way, or by chance offend them, as are the snake, the sloworm, or other serpent, it would be the wisest way for such as love their lives to rid the world of these fatally mischievous reasonable creatures as fast as they met with them, or to appoint some certain days for hunting them, as we do noisome beasts: but to examine their suspicious intentions, to question their actions, to arraign their persons, or put them upon a formal or legal trial of their life, would be as ridiculous as to produce witnesses against a snake, to empannel a jury upon a mad dog, or to take bail for a wolf's appearance before a butcher in an assembly of mastives.

160 5. The common notions of good and evil, and the engraffed opinion of contingency in human actions, have taught the lawgivers of every nation to put notorious malefactors unto more exquisite tortures than we do harmful creatures; either to enforce them to utter what no destiny nor complexion makes them voluntarily confess, or else to deter others (that are as naturally disposed to evil as they were) from doing the like. Scarce any malefactor (unless he be poisoned

[d] In Dialogistam.

with this opinion of absolute necessity) but will acknowledge that it was possible for him to have done otherwise than he hath done, possible for him to have avoided the doom which is passed upon him by man: which to have avoided had been absolutely impossible, if it were to be awarded upon him by God's eternal decree, or (which is all one) if in respect of this decree it had been necessary. As ignorance of the true God and his saving truth makes the former error more excusable in the Stoicks than in such Christians as shall maintain it; so might impotency exempt that god which the Stoicks worshipped (whether nature, fate or some other distinct celestial power) from those imputations unto which omnipotency makes the God of Christians liable, if all things were by virtue of his decree absolutely necessary. It was a received opinion among many heathens, that the gods themselves were subject unto fate; and for this reason, when any thing fell out in their judgment amiss, fates commonly did either entirely bear the blame, or the greatest part of it; and their gods (indeed) had deserved pity rather than blame, if they could do no better than they did, as being over-mastered by fates; but for a Christian to inveigh against fates, is to accuse or deny his God. If fates be nothing, he hath no reason to complain of them; if any thing they be, they are of the true God's making, who made all things, who cannot possibly be subject to any thing that he hath made. Nor can it stand with our allegiance to say, when any disasters befall us, that our God could no otherwise choose, that our mischances were the absolutely necessary effects of his omnipotent decree. One special cause of this error, and of some men's adherence to it, is a jealousy, or zealous needless fear, lest they should grant God to be impotent, or not so omnipotent but that some things

might take possession of being without his leave or notice; the original of this fear is want of distinction between chance or casualty, and such contingency as hath been expressed.

6. Many reasons might be alleged sufficient to demonstrate the inevitable absurdities of this supposed absolute necessity. But it is one labour to convince an error before indifferent hearers; another, to make men forsake the errors which have long possessed them; a third, to win them unto a liking of the contrary truth. For effecting the two latter, no means can be so effectual in respect of their disposition with whom we have to deal, as a plain declaration how ill this opinion of absolute necessity, how well this doctrine of mixed possibility or contingency, consorts, first, with their own resolution of other difficulties in this very argument whereof we treat, secondly, with the perpetual voice of God's Spirit, and his messengers, specially when they seek *ex professo* to persuade to good, and to dissuade from evil.

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CHAP. XV.

The principal Conclusions which are held by the Favourers of absolute Necessity may be more clearly justified, and acquitted from all Inconveniences, by admitting a mixed Possibility or Contingency in human Actions.

1. THE most I have met withal are afraid in plain terms to maintain, 'that God did as immediately and as necessarily decree Adam's fall, or state of sin, as his original justice, or state of integrity;' for this were to make him as true, as proper, and necessary a cause of sin and of all evil as he is of goodness. To allay the harshness of some speeches heretofore used by those men whom they favour, they will grant no more than

this, 'that God did decree to permit his fall.' But the speech is improper and very ambiguous; and in what sense soever it may be taken, it must plead its warrant or right use from our opinion, theirs can afford it none. Permission, to speak properly, is a virtual part of the decree itself, not the object whereto the decree is terminated. But to let this pass; we will take 'God's decree to permit' to be all one as if they had said 'God's permissive decree.' Did God then by his decree permit Adam to sin? if he did, this decree was either just or unjust. Whatsoever is by just decree permitted, is by the same decree sufficiently warranted; at least the punishment otherwise due unto it is dispensed with. Such divorces as were unlawful from the first institution of matrimony in Paradise were permitted to the Israelites for the hardness of their hearts by Moses, and for this reason they were not punished by the judicial law. If it should please our sovereign to permit sickly students to eat flesh in Lent, we would take his professed permission for a sufficient dispensation with the penal statutes in this case provided. God questionless would never have punished Adam for eating an apple, if by his eternal decree he had [e]permitted him to have eaten it. But their meaning haply is, not that God did allow or approve his eating of it, seeing he threatened it with death; but if by his decree he did not allow it, he did permit it only in such a sense, as we may say the laws of our land permit men to be hanged, because they keep not men close prisoners, nor so tie their hands that they cannot steal, rob, or kill, before they be

[e] Quam longe quæso est a jubente permittens? Qui enim sinit nos ista (mala) perferre, et prohibere potest ne perferamus, probat absque dubio debere perferre et quæcunque patimur, sustinere.—Salvian. lib. 8. in initio, p. (260.) 185.

suspected or convicted of felony, robbery, or murder. But no tyrant did ever beforehand forbid such a fact, under pain of death, without a supposed natural possibility to avoid it; and just laws afford ordinary or civil means for satisfying nature in necessities, lest these (as they know no law) enforce men to use their natural possibilities or faculties amiss. The laws of this land and others, which make theft matter of death, permit men the free employment of bodily faculties to earn their bread, or (if they be impotent) to crave or accept the benevolence of others, lest they should perish for hunger, or be enforced to steal. If our laws or lawgivers, not permitting any of these means or the like, should punish the taking of a loaf of bread or cup of drink with death, they might be more truly said to enjoin than permit theft; to be more delighted with the blood of the needy, than with preservation of public peace, albeit they did not set other men's meat
162 before them when they are hungered, nor lead their hands to take it. In like manner, he that saith God did permit Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, and by eating to incur death, doth necessarily imply that God permitted him the free use of his external and internal faculties to satisfy his appetite with some other meat. Now the free use of any faculty includes the concourse or cooperation of God, without which it is impossible any creature should move; and this concourse was a part of his decree or will as it concerned this act. More plainly: he that permitted Adam to sin, did more than permit him to abstain from sin, or to persevere in obedience. If then God, in permitting him only to sin, did afford means necessary for reducing this possibility of sinning into a sinful act not allowed, his more than permission of him to abstain from sin, his commandment to persevere in obedience, did not only

suppose a true possibility for him to abstain and persevere, but include withal better means for reducing this possibility into act, than were afforded for enabling him actually to sin. These two contrary possibilities, and the several means for accomplishing them, must bear a proportion answerable to a mere permission without approbation, or to a prohibition, and to a peremptory command of civil authority. Now every just lawgiver affords better means and encouragement for accomplishing his commands or requests, than he doth for breaking or neglecting them.

2. For conclusion, when they say God, by his eternal decree, did permit Adam's fall, their meaning rightly expressed is no more than this, God did not decree that his perseverance should be necessary: for necessity of perseverance excludes all possibility of falling: but if his fall had been necessary in respect of the eternal decree, it had not only been permitted, but allowed and required. It remains then that both were possible, neither necessary in respect of the Divine decree. Or, to untwist the knot a little further, God by his decree did permit and allow him a possibility to fall; but he did not allow the reduction of this possibility into act; that is, he gave it him, not to the end that he should fall, but that his perseverance might be more beneficial: he did not only permit or allow him a possibility of perseverance, but did command and require the reduction of this possibility into act.

3. This form of wholesome doctrine admitted will clearly enlighten the truth of another distinction or resolution much used, but mightily obscured, or rather quite stifled, by such as hold all things necessary in respect of the eternal decree. The distinction is: 'God is the cause of every action, but he is not the cause of the obliquity which accompanies sinful actions,

nor of sin as it is sin.' This is their last apology for avoiding that imputation of making God the author of sin. Herein we both agree; the coexistence of the all-working decree (or Divine cooperation) is necessarily required to every action or effect; every action includes a motion, and *in him we move, we live, and have our being.* But he that will grant this cooperation or actual coexistence of the all-working decree to be the necessary cause of every action unto which it is most necessarily required, must, upon the same terms, grant God to be not the necessary only, but the only cause of all and every obliquity, of all and every sin, of all that hath been, is, or can be blameworthy in men or devils, from their creation to everlasting. The demonstration of this inconvenience or absurdity, wherewith we charge the adverse opinion, (but no
163 maintainer of it) must be referred unto the discussions of the state of innocency and the manner of sin's entering into the world: we are now engaged to extract a better meaning out of their other words than they themselves express, or can truly be contained in them, until they abandon the opinion of absolute necessity in human actions as they have reference to the eternal decree.

Seeing it is agreed upon that God and man are joint agents in every sinful action, or in effects essentially evil (such, questionless, was man's desire to be like God, or his lusting after the forbidden fruit), the problem remains, why both should not be equal sharers in the sin; or how it is possible justly to condemn men of iniquity, without some imputation unto God, who is the principal agent in all actions. 'Shall we be partial for him, or seek to excuse him by his greatness? Shall we say he cannot do amiss, because he is supreme Lord over all, and may do with his creatures

what he list?' To such as count the donative of robbers a true boon or real courtesy, to such as can magnify their own integrity, whereof they give no proof, save only as he did by negatives, *Non hominem occidi*, "I am no murderer;" the poet hath shaped an answer as fit as pertinent, *Non pasces in cruce corvos*, "Thou shalt not feed ravens upon a gibbet." To say God is the author of sin were hideous blasphemy; yet to say he is no tempter, no seducer of mankind to evil, is not to offer praise unto him. Let my spirit vanish with my breath, and my immortal soul return to nothing, rather than suffer herself to be overtaken with such a dead slumber as can rest contented to set forth his glory by bare negatives, or by not being the author of sin, who is most highly to be praised in all his works, whose goodness is infinitely greater in concurring to sinful actions, than the goodness of his best creatures in the accomplishment of their most sincere intentions!

4. The truth of this conclusion is necessarily grounded upon these assertions, hereafter to be discussed: 'That man's possibility or hopes of attaining everlasting happiness was of necessity to be tempered with a possibility of sinning, or falling into misery.' To permit or allow man this possibility of sinning, and to bestow upon him the contrary possibility of not sinning, and hope of happiness, was one and the same branch of Divine goodness. One and the selfsame branch of God's goodness it was, to allow this possibility of sinning, and to afford his concourse for reducing of it into act: for unless he had decreed to afford his concourse thereto, it had been impossible for man actually to have sinned; and if for man to sin had been made impossible by God's decree, it had been alike impossible for him to have done well or ill,

or to become truly happy. Briefly, God, in that he decreed a mixture of contrary possibilities, decreed withal a concourse or cooperation suitable unto and sufficient for the actual accomplishment of both. To the problem propounded, the answer from these grounds is easy: Albeit God and man be joint agents in every action or effect essentially evil, yet the whole sin is wholly man's, because the nature of sin consists either in man's using the possibility of sin, allowed of God for his good, to accomplish such acts as God disallows, or in not using the contrary possibility unto such acts as he not only alloweth and approveth, but requireth and commandeth, such as he most bountifully rewardeth, and unto whose accomplishment he affordeth, not his ordinary concourse only, but his special furtherance and assistance. In every sin of commission we ap-
164 prove and make choice of those acts which his infinite goodness disalloweth. In every sin of omission we do not approve those acts which he approveth: although perhaps it may be questioned whether there can be any sin of pure omission, or not mixed with commission; that is, any sin wherein we do not either like what God dislikes, or reject and contemn what he likes and commends unto us for good.

5. From these resolutions we may find some truth in an usual position, which without this truth presupposed is palpably false: 'Every action or effect, as it is an effect or action, or as it proceeds from God, is good.' The best meaning whereof it is capable must be this; 'God's goodness is seen in every action, even in those which are most sinful.' To vouchsafe his cooperation to them is a branch of his goodness, because man could not be happy without a possibility of deserving to be miserable. But human actions or effects in their own nature, indefinitely considered, or

in the abstract as they are actions, are neither morally good nor morally bad. When it is said that every action, as an action, is good, this must be understood of transcendental goodness only, of which kind of goodness moral evil, or sin itself, is partaker. If every action, as it is an action, were morally good, it were impossible any action should be morally evil. If we consider human actions not indefinitely, or with this reduplication, as they are actions, but descending unto particulars, some are good, some are bad, and some (perhaps) positively indifferent: but of this hereafter.

CHAP. XVI.

The former Contingency in human Actions or mutual Possibility of obtaining Reward or incurring Punishment, proved by the infallible Rule of Faith, and by the Tenor of God's Covenant with his People.

1. THOUGH manifest deductions of ill sounding consequences from their positions, which we refute, and more commodious explanations of other tenents common to both, may somewhat move the favourers of universal necessity to a dislike of their own opinions, and in part incline them to the opposite truth; yet is it positive proof of scriptures that must strike the main stroke, and fasten their assents unto it: and God forbid they should be so uncharitable as to think that we, or any sons of the true church, would be unwilling to put ourselves upon this trial. Scripture we grant (and are ready, upon as high and hard terms as they, to maintain) is the only infallible rule of rectitude or obliquity in opinions concerning God or man's salvation; yet are we not hereby bound to reject reason, and infallible rule of art, as incompetent judges, what propositions in scripture are equipollent, which oppo-

site, which subordinate; or what collections from undoubted sacred maxims are necessary or probable, or what conclusions are altogether false and sophistical. Nor ought they to suspect reason in others to be unsanctified, because it is accompanied with rules of profane sciences; for even these are the gifts of God,
165 and are sanctified in every Christian by the rule of faith: and inasmuch as both of us admit scripture to be the only rule of faith in itself most infallible, both of us are tied, by infallible consequents of truth from this rule derived, to admit of this maxim following[f]: 'God's threats and promises, his exhortations, admonitions, or protestations, whether immediately made by himself or by his prophets, contain in them greater truth and sincerity than this in our admonitions, exhortations, and promises.' His truth and sincerity in all his ways are the rule or pattern which we are to imitate, but which we cannot hope to equalize.

2. Put the case then, a religious, wise, and gracious prince should exhort a young gentleman (that in rigour of law had deserved death for some emulous quarrel in the court) to behave himself better hereafter, and he should be sure to find greater favour at his hands than any of his adversaries: no man would suspect any determination in the prince to take away his life for this offence, or any purpose to entrap him in some other. A minister of public justice, in our memory, told a butcher (whom he then sentenced to death for manslaughter) that he might kill calves, oxen, and sheep, but mankind was no butchery ware; he might not kill his honest neighbours. The solecism was so uncouth, and so ill beseeming the seat of

[f] Vide Suffrag. Britannorum in Concil. Dordr. thesi 3. de antecedaneis ad conversionem. Vide etiam D. Wardum Concione de Gratia discriminante. p. 5—7. editionis 2.

gravity and of justice, that it moved laughter (though in a case to be lamented) throughout the assembly; and a young student, standing near the bar, advised the poor condemned man to entreat a license to kill calves and sheep that Lent. The wisest of men may sometimes err, sometimes place good words amiss, or give wholesome counsel (such as this was, had it been uttered in due time and place) out of season. But to spend good words of comfort and encouragement upon such as thou hast certainly appointed to die; to flout the children of destruction with fair promises of preeminence, *that be far from thee, (O Lord:) Shall not the Judge of all the earth do (that which is) right (and just*[g]*)?* a thing well beseeming the best and wisest princes of the earth to imitate? Was then the sentence of condemnation for Cain's exile or utter destruction without possibility of revocation, when thou entreatedst him as a most loving father[h], *Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.* Did that which the text saith afterward came to pass, come by inevitable necessity: *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him?* My adversaries (for I am not theirs) must be entreated to pardon me, if I be as resolute and peremptory for my opinion hitherto delivered, as they are for any other. For reason, and conscience ruled by scripture, persuades me it is as possible for the Judge of quick and dead to be unjust in his sentences, or unsincere in his encouragement, as

[g] Gen. xviii. 25. [h] Gen. iv. 6—8.

that Cain's destruction should be in respect of his decree altogether necessary, or impossible to have been avoided. When the Lord took first notice of his emulation and envy at his younger brother, God would not banish him from his brother's presence, nor so tie his hands that he could not strike; but he used all the means that equity (in like case) requires to move his heart, that way which it was very possible for it to be moved; and unto this motion Cain had both God's assistance and encouragement, as ready as his general concourse to conceive anger in his heart, or to lift up his hand against his brother.

166 3. The very tenor of God's grand covenant with the sons of Abraham includes this twofold possibility; one, of attaining his extraordinary gracious favour by doing well, another, of incurring miserable calamities by doing ill. *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely,* &c. *I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright,* Levit. xxvi. 3—13. *But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague,* &c. Levit. xxvi. 14—16, &c.

This tenor or condition was to continue one and the same throughout all generations: but some generations, as the event hath proved, were *de facto* partakers of the blessings promised, others have had their portion in the curses. Shall we hence infer, that prosperity was in respect of God's decree or good pleasure altogether necessary unto such as prospered, not so much as possible unto those that perished, or that their calamity was absolutely necessary? I would say rather, and I have God's word, yea, his hearty wishes for my warrant, that the most prosperous times which any of Abraham's or David's posterity enjoyed did come far short of that measure of prosperity which by God's eternal decree was possible to all, even to the whole stock of Jacob throughout all their generations: *Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.* Psalm lxxxi. 13—15. But in what estate? *Fed with the finest of the wheat, and satisfied with honey out of the rock*, ver. 16. Were these mere wishes of wind, which vanished with the avoucher's breath? did the psalmist utter them out of tender affection to his people and country, without commission from his Maker? or was he less affected towards his people than this his messenger, that his message wants the weight of everlasting truth? To these and the like demands, of many bad answers this is the best and most common: 'God would undoubtedly have made his promise good, and done as well by Israel as here he wisheth, if Israel could have turned to him, or done what he requires.' But that, say the same men, was in respect of God's

decree, or secret will, impossible. Whence, seeing the condition neither was nor could be performed by Israel, God was not bound to bestow these blessings upon them, but free to reserve his store unto himself, or for some other people, which was proffered (but upon conditions impossible to be performed) unto Israel. Might not churlish Nabal have promised abundance of bread, of wine, and flesh to David's servants upon like terms? May not cut-throat usurers assure bags of gold to bedridden or decrepit limbs, upon condition they will fetch them from the top of high towers or steep mountains? But what kindness, what sincerity could there be in such lavish proffers, specially if the impotent wretches were by covenant
167 excluded from all use of crutches? Yet is it more possible for a cripple to go without his crutches, than for Israel to walk in the ways of God without his aid or assistance. Necessity therefore constrains us to confess the one of these two: either that there was no more sincerity in the Almighty's protestations than in Nabal's or the usurer's supposed bounty, which they never meant to use but upon performance of impossibilities; or else his promises, if they had any sincerity in them, did include his furtherance and assistance unto Israel for performing the condition required. Now unto whatsoever effect or event the furtherance or special assistance of omnipotent power is, upon the truth and sincerity of Divine promise, always ready and assured, the same effect cannot truly be deemed impossible in respect of the eternal decree; and whatsoever is not in respect of this decree impossible, the nonexistence of it, or the existence of the contrary effect, cannot in respect of the same decree be necessary. So then, neither was Israel's well doing and prosperity, nor their ill doing and calamity, at any

time absolutely necessary in respect of God's decree; both were possible, both contingent.

4. The truth of these collections from God's word, (or rather of these infallible consequences of his essential goodness, sincerity, and truth,) though necessary and evident unto artists, may from other positive authorities of the same word be ratified, *a fortior*, to common sense. If neither these good things which God sincerely purposeth and expressly promiseth, nor that evil which he seriously and expressly threatens, be necessary in respect of his decree; much less can that good which is neither particularly promised or avouched, or that evil which is not expressly threatened or foretold by his infallible messengers, be held necessary in respect of his decree. Now that the prosperity which he expressly promiseth by such messengers is not so necessary as to exclude all possibility of contrary evil, nor the evil which he solemnly denounceth so necessary as not to leave a true possibility for a contrary blessing, his prophet hath given such a general and evident assurance, not to Israel only, but to all the nations of the earth, as we cannot deny but that it was devised of purpose, by the Lord himself, as a post-statute to prevent this strange misconstruction which his people had then made, and which he then foresaw would afterwards be enforced upon his decrees or laws, by this prejudicate opinion of absolute necessity. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that*

it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. Jer. xviii. 7—10. And if we may guess at the nature of the disease by the medicine, and the manner of applying it, the house of Israel was at this time almost desperately sick of this error which we refute. Or what need we frame conjectures from the quality of the medicine, whenas the working of it hath made the crisis palpable and apparent; the pestilence is best known by the botch, or outbursting. What then was the issue of that cordial which the prophet ministered unto them, being but the extraction of the former generals? *Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I frame*
168 *evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.* We have seen the application of the medicine, what was the operation? *And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.* Jer. xviii. 11, 12. But did the prophet take their answer *verbatim* as they uttered it? No, God did not appoint him to keep a register of their words, but to make a comment upon the secret language of their hearts. They are sufficiently convicted to have said, *We will every one do the imagination of his evil heart,* in that the imaginations of their heart were evil, and they had resolved to retain their wonted principles, and not to hearken unto the prophet's doctrine. The true and literal paraphrase of their reply no interpreter extant hath so fully expressed as the usual language of some in our times briefly doth; 'What shall be, will be; there is no hope the world will amend: if it be God's will to prosper the courses which are taken, all will be well: if not, his will however must be done.' Thus we de-

lude and put off our Maker with *ifs* and *ands*, whenas his will revealed, as well for private as public good, so we would address ourselves to do it, is plain and absolute; and it is impossible we should address ourselves to do it, unless we would hearken better to such as teach it. To expect any other fruit or use of this doctrine of absolute necessity, than carnal security in time of peace and prosperity, and than desperate wilfulness in distress and adversity, were a madness: and seeing this frenzy did still grow greater and greater in the Jew, as the destruction of Jerusalem (whereof it was both times the principal cause and most fearful prognostic) grew nearer; the Lord authorized another prophet (after Jeremy) to interpose his oath for the cure of it. They thought that death and destruction, when they approached, were armed with absolute necessity, (derived from God's decree,) to punish them for their fathers' sins: and in this conceit many yielded unto them, when they might easily have conquered them. To discover the vanity of this scale, and to acquit his omnipotent decree from the suspected imposition of necessity, *As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Ezek. xviii. 2—4. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?* ver. 23. *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn your-*

selves, and live ye. vv. 31, 32. If the returning of this people, wherein God took pleasure, were not necessary, as the event hath proved, (for the most part of them did not return,) it must needs argue a spice of their frenzy, to think their death, wherein he took no pleasure, should be necessary. The only orthodoxal resolution of this point then must be this: 'It was God's good will and pleasure (the formal dictate and absolute injunction of his eternal and irresistible decree) that neither the life or death of such as perished should be necessary, but that both should be possible; albeit the choice of life had been more pleasant to God, who had complained with grief, *Perditio tua ex te O Israel.*'

169 CHAP. XVII.

That God's Will is always done, albeit many Particulars which God willeth be not done, and many done which he willeth should not be done.

1. *Aut erit aut non erit,* is a prophecy which will never be out of date, impossible ever to be impeached of falsehood; an answer as universally true to all, as unsufficient to any question concerning things to come. The truth of every disjunctive proposition, as logicians teach, is fully salved, if any one member though of never so many be true. Or if the disjunction or division be artificially formal, the actual existence of one part or member excludes the actual existence of the other; so doth the absolute necessity of the one exclude all possibility of the other's reduction into act. If I should wage any sum that it would either rain all day to-morrow, or be fair all day to-morrow, no man of understanding would put me to prove that it did both rain all the day and hold up all the day; the proof of either part would be sufficient to evince the

truth of my disjunctive assertion; that both should be actually true, is impossible. Or if my adversary could substantially prove either any intermission of rain or interruption of fair weather, his advantage against me would be as evident, because the proposition which he was to make good against me was but disjunctive; so that of any two minutes in the whole day, if the one were rainy, and the other fair, my universal disjunctive must needs be false, and his apparently true, because directly contradictory unto mine: that it should at one and the same time rain and not rain, is impossible, and comes not within the compass of any contradictory contestation, it can be no object of lay or wager.

2. When we say that God in many human actions decrees a mixture or multiplicity of possibilities, our meaning is, that the tenor of God's eternal and omnipotent word, from which all things derive as well the law and manner of their being, as their being itself, is, in respect of the several possible events decreed, not conjunctive or categorical, but disjunctive; and we hold it a sin to think or say, that the only wise Almighty Creator is not able to conceive or make propositions as truly disjunctive as any of our making are, or not able to make as formal and contradictory opposition between their several parts as any human wit can conceive. Thus much being granted, our intended inference is an everlasting truth: God's decree, or determinate proposition, concerning the supposed multiplicity of possibilities or manifold events, all alike possible, is always exactly fulfilled, when any one of the events, whose possibilities are decreed, gets actual existence: to reduce more of them than one into act at one and the same time is in many cases altogether impossible, and falls not within the object of omnipo-

tency. If the reduction of any one of them into actual possession of its own being were in respect of his decree, or by any other means, altogether necessary, his decree should necessarily be broken, and his omnipotency might be overborne: for the necessity of one's being takes away all possibility of being from the contradictory which omnipotency (as is supposed) had bestowed upon it. Finally, God's decree in respect of
170 all and every part of its proper object is alike omnipotent: and therefore it is as impossible for any necessity (by virtue or respect of what cause soever) to encroach upon those events, the law or manner of whose production God hath decreed to be contingent, as for contingency to hinder the production of those events, the law or manner of whose production or existence he hath decreed to be necessary; as impossible for necessity to mingle with absolute contingency, from which God hath separated it, as for contingency to be wedded to absolute necessity, whose marriage God hath forbidden by an everlasting decree.

Objection. 3. The only difficulty wherewith these conclusions can (as I conceive) with probability be charged may be conceived thus: Admitting God's decree concerning the house of Israel's life or death were (as evidently it was) disjunctive, and did essentially include a possibility of life and a possibility of death, in respect of all or most of their persons, or of their public state; yet no man will deny but that amongst the several or opposite members of this or the like decree God wills one more than another; for so he saith, *That he willed not the death, but the life of him that died.* Now if that which God willeth not may come to pass, and that which he willeth may not come to pass, or if, of two possible events, that whose actual being he willeth ten thousand times more ardently, never get

actual being or existence, (as being prevented by the actual accomplishment of the contradictory or incompatible event, which he less willeth,) how can his will in this case be fulfilled? and if his will be not fulfilled, his decree must needs be broken; and if his decree may be broken, how is his will said to be irresistible? how do we believe him to be omnipotent? Some, perhaps, would hence conclude, that if of two objects which we suppose to be alike truly possible, there be no necessity that that should come to pass which God willeth most, or any probability for that to come to pass which he less willeth, or willeth not at all, but rather the contrary; then there is a possibility, or rather a necessity, that his will should not be always fulfilled, that he might sometimes sit down with a kind of loss, and say with impotent man, "I have failed of my purpose." The best preparation for fit and peaceable entertainment of the orthodoxal solution to these difficulties will be, to declare the evident and necessary truth of that assertion which they object unto us as a dangerous inconvenience, able, in their judgment, to infer the last conclusion. Answer.

Truth fully and evidently declared will justify itself against all gainsayers. The assertion which, we grant, will necessarily follow from our former discussions, and comes now to justify itself, is this; 'That such things as God no way willeth ofttimes come to pass, whenas their contradictories, which he wills most ardently, come not to pass.' The principal instance for justifying this truth is the repentance and life of a sinner, which God hath sworn that he willeth; so doth he not his death, if we will believe his oath. If any man's verdict shall scatter from mine or others' which maintain this doctrine, I must call God and his conscience to witness whether he hath not left that

undone which God would have had him to do, and sometimes done that which God would have had him not to do? Let him that will answer negatively to this interrogative indite that confession which we daily make in our liturgy of falsehood or slander. Let him call for Jacob's ladder down from heaven, and
171 require a guard of angels to conduct him safely into God's presence; for if he have as truly and continually done God's will here on earth, as the angels do it in heaven, he may justly challenge speedy admission into their society. But if he can with safe conscience communicate with us sinful men in that confession, his exceptions against our assertion are but needless scrupulosities, altogether against reason, whatsoever they be in respect of his conscience: yet to his exceptions we are to frame a further answer.

4. There is an absolute necessity that God's will should always be fulfilled; but there is no such necessity that it should always be fulfilled by the parties to whom it is revealed or directed. They are tied indeed by necessity of precept, and at their peril, always to do it, but the Almighty God doth not refer the fulfilling or evacuation of it to their fidelity, choice, or resolution; for so the certainty or infallibility of executing his decree should be but commensurable to the fragility of our nature, and that which some object unto us would fall directly upon themselves, to wit, That God's will should depend upon man's will. As he always grants the requests of the faithful, or, as the Psalmist speaks, *gives such as delight in him their hearts' desire*, albeit he always gives them not the particulars or materials which they request or heartily desire; so he knows how to fulfil his own will, or do his pleasure, albeit those particulars or materials which he ardently wills and takes most pleasure in, be not

always done by us: and this answer might suffice unto a reader not scrupulously curious: but sophistical and captious objections require artificial and formal solutions. The former objection may perhaps be framed more captiously thus: Of more particulars proposed to the choice of men, if that be not always done which God willeth most, his will is not done at all. For as a lesser good whilst it stands in competition with a greater is rather evil than good; so that which is less willed or desired cannot be said to be willed or desired at all in respect of that which is more desired, specially in the language of God's Spirit, which expressly saith that *God will have mercy, and not sacrifice:* whence it will follow, that when sacrifice was offered without performance of duties of mercy or obedience, God's will was not done, but broken. It is God's will, likewise, that we should go unto the house of mourning, rather than unto the house of mirth. The duties to be performed in the house of mourning are many: to mourn, to fast, to pray, with other branches of humiliation, all which God truly willeth, in different measure, according to the diversity of their nature, or the more or less intensive manner of their performance. The transgressions likewise usual and frequent in the house of unhallowed mirth are many, and much different as well in quality as degree; all detested of God as contrary, to his most holy will, but more or less detested according to their nature, quality, or degree, or other circumstance. Suppose a man to whom choice of going into the house of mirth or mourning is solemnly proposed, the inconveniences of the one, and gracious acceptance of the other in God's sight, seriously pressed by God's minister, do utterly reject the preacher's counsel, and adventure upon the most desperate evil

that is practised in the house of mirth; shall we say God's will is in this case fulfilled? Yes; though the evils which he willeth not were ten thousand, and man did desperately resolve to do the very worst, and most contrary to his will, yet that which he willeth most
172 shall still be done: for it is his absolute and peremptory will, that all the particulars offered to man's choice, as well those which his holiness most abhorreth, as those which he willeth most, should be truly possible for a man to choose without impediment, that none should be necessary. Now this liberty being left to man which way soever his will inclineth, God's will shall be most infallibly fulfilled in the selfsame measure as if the very best had been chosen by man; seeing it is his absolute will to grant him freedom (at his peril) to choose the very worst and refuse the best. And the peril is, that God's will shall be done upon him according to the measure it was neglected by him. As this proposition, 'The sun will either shine or not shine this day at twelve of the clock,' will be as true if the sun shine not, as if it shine; so God's will being (as is supposed in this case) disjunctive, shall be as truly fulfilled, albeit man doth that which he willeth not, as if he did that which he willed most. For his will (as was now said) may (according to the same measure) be fulfilled two ways, either by us or upon us; whether it be this way or that way fulfilled, it is all one to God, but much better for us to do it, than to have it done upon us. And though it be possible for us not to do it, yet not doing it there is no possibility left that it shall not be done upon us. Inasmuch then as God's will must of necessity be done, and no man can do it by doing evil, (seeing it is set only on that which is truly good,) the punishment of such as continue to do evil is absolutely necessary, that is,

altogether as unavoidable as if they had been appointed to it from all eternities, or created to no other end than that they might be punished. For the punishment of evil is good, and is for this reason a part of God's will, or rather a part of the object of his irresistible will or inviolable decree; yet may we not say that God[i] simply willeth evil, or delighteth in punitive justice, which he never willeth but upon supposal of evil deserts in the creature. As for the evil itself, which deserveth punishment, that God is not said (in true divinity) to will at all, either *voluntate signi*, or *beneplaciti*, either by his secret or revealed, or by his antecedent or consequent will. For nothing is evil but that which swerveth from or is contrary to the rule of goodness, and other rule of goodness there is none besides God's goodness; nor doth he will any thing that is not consonant to his goodness; so is not any thing that is truly evil. They which otherwise teach, that God in any sort can will that which is morally evil, have mightily forgot the rules of logic; for if nothing be evil but that which God would not have done, then nothing which God would have done can be evil.

CHAP. XVIII. 173

Of the Distinction of God's Will into Antecedent and Consequent. Of the Explication and Use of it.

1. God's will being, as all confess, indivisible, some there be which hold all distinctions concerning it no

[i] Et vere clamor et grandis clamor est, quando pietas Dei, peccatorum clamoribus vincitur, ut peccantes punire cogatur. Ostendit ergo Dominus, quam invitus puniat etiam gravissimos peccatores, dicens, quod clamor Sodomorum ad se ascenderit, hoc est dicere: misericordia quidem mea mihi suadet ut parcam, sed tamen peccatorum clamor cogit ut puniam.—Salvianus, lib. 1. p. 19.

less unfitting than the division of Christ's seamless coat. Others mislike that distinction of his antecedent and consequent will, and yet are content to distinguish his will into revealed and secret, or into *voluntatem signi et beneplaciti.* The use notwithstanding of the first distinction, of his antecedent and consequent will, is most ancient; warranted by the authority of Chrysostom, and well exemplified by Damascene. And of this distinction I have made choice in other meditations, as most commodious (to my apprehension) for resolving many problems arising out of prophetical and evangelical passages concerning the fulfilling of God's will in his threats or promises. The ingenuous reader will not be so uncharitable or injurious towards Chrysostom or Damascene, as to suspect that either of them imagined two wills in God; unto which imputation they are most justly liable which affect the distinction of God's secret and revealed will, or of *voluntatis signi et beneplaciti.* For every distinction of God's will must be framed *ex parte volitorum, non ex parte volentis,* in respect of the things willed, not in respect of him that willeth them. We must in charity and good manners permit Chrysostom and Damascene that liberty of speech which we take ourselves. Now it is usual with all of us to attribute that *verbo tenus* unto the cause which really and properly belongs only unto the effect, or to denominate the intellectual faculty from the quality of the object to which it hath reference; as when we say the sun is hot, the understanding is practick, &c. The meaning of those two good authors, whom we follow in the use of the distinction of God's antecedent or consequent will, was this, or the like: that God, by one and the same indivisible will, might differently affect or approve divers objects, according to the nature, quality, or

degrees of goodness contained in them. And certain it is, that the immensity or greatness of our God doth not make his power or will to be unwieldy. Though he be in power truly infinite, yet he always worketh not according to the infinity of his power, but ofttimes more gently and placidly than the weakest or softest spirited of his reasonable creatures can do. Though his will likewise be always irresistible, yet is it not always so peremptorily set on this or that particular object willed by him, as man's will for the most part is. The variety of particular objects which he truly willeth in different measure, is much greater than the wit of man can comprehend. So is the liberty or variety of choice which he alloweth unto his creature, much greater than we can, without grudging, afford to such as have dependance on us. Some things he willeth in the first place and directly; though not so peremptorily, but that things less willed by him, or contrary evils, which he willeth not, may get the start, or take place of them in human choice. Other things he willeth in the second place, or by consequence, as in case that which in the first place he willed be (by abuse of man's freewill) rejected. The former he is said to will by his antecedent will, because 174
the object willed by him hath antecedence or pre-eminence in respect of his *beneplacitum* or acceptance: the latter he is said to will by his consequent will, that is, not in the first place or directly, but by consequent, as supposing those objects which he better approved to be neglected. Whatsoever is good in itself, and good withal for a reasonable creature to make choice of, that God is said to will by his antecedent will, as the repentance of a sinner, and the joyful fruits which the sinner shall reap by his penitency. Whatsoever in itself is not evil, or contrary to

the rule of goodness, but evil to the reasonable creature which must suffer it, as sickness, death, all kind of torture or calamity, that God willeth only by his consequent will. We may not deny but that he truly willeth the death of obstinate sinners, yet this he willeth by his consequent will. Their obstinacy in sin he willeth not at all, for if he did, he would not punish it: for punishment is the necessary consequent of his will neglected. Both these branches of one and the same will (which, from the reference only which they have unto their different objects, we conceive to be two, or diverse) are subordinate to his absolute and peremptory will, which is, that man should have a liberty of doing and not doing those things which in the first place he willed or liked better. But is not this liberty of man an imperfection?

2. An issue, though a blemish to youth and livelihood, is ofttimes a good mean or principal cause of health to an unsound and crazy body. So possibility of declining to evil, albeit in itself an imperfection, and not possibly incident to eternal and immutable goodness, is no way contrary to the participated actual goodness of the reasonable creature, whereof it is an essential or constitutive part, at the least a necessary ingredient or condition precedent to the constitution of it. And imperfection, with reference to this end, may be the object of God's antecedent will, or part of that which in the first place he willeth and principally intends. But inasmuch as actual evil is formally dissonant to actual goodness, he which is actually and infinitely good cannot but hate or dislike actual evil in whomsoever it is found, as much as he loveth the contrary good. Now punishment, or *malum pœnæ*, being as necessary a consequent of God's hate or dislike of sin, as reward or happiness is of his love

to virtue and piety, the reasonable creature, by declining from virtue to vice, from good to bad, doth *ipso facto* and inevitably bring evil, *malum pœnæ et damni*, tribulation and anguish upon itself. By *reward* and *punishment* in this place, we understand, not only life and death everlasting, (of whose reference to God's eternal decree we shall in particular dispute hereafter, if superiors shall so think fit,) but every temporal blessing or cross, all prosperity or calamity, specially public and remarkable. Prosperity we always take to be a pledge of God's love (though not always of the person on whom it is bestowed, yet of some good quality in him, or in some of his, serving for public use or private imitation) and is always (in the beginning at least) an effect of God's antecedent will. Calamity we take always for a token of God's dislike, though not always of the person afflicted, yet either in somewhat of him to be amended, or of somewhat formerly done by him to be by others avoided, and is an effect of God's consequent will. For he wills no evil at all, not *malum pœnæ*, but as it is either a punishment or correction for evil done or good neglected, or as it is a medicine to prevent the doing of evil, or neglect of goodness.

3. From the infinite variety of possibilities author- 175
ized by the eternal decree, and their correspondent consequences, which one time or other actually follow, upon their reductions into act, by the irresistible award of the same decree; we may resolve many difficulties, and abandon sundry inconveniences, wherewith the heathen in their vain speculations, and many Christians in more grievous temptations, charge either the truth or goodness of God's providence. The variety of such possibilities amounts, partly from the specifical nature of the objects made possible by the divine

decree, partly from the several degrees of good or evil contained in such objects, or in men's actions concerning them. The whole latitude (if I may so speak) of God's providence, as it concerns kingdoms, states, or persons, consists in moderating and ordering the possible devolutions or alternations of the reasonable creature from his antecedent will to his consequent. The alternations or devolutions themselves may be numberless, save only to God; so may the degrees be of man's dissonancy or consonancy to God's antecedent will, throughout the course of his life.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the divers Acceptions or Importances of Fate, especially among the Heathen Writers.

1. THE very name of *fate* will be, I know, to many very offensive, unto whom I am unwilling to give the least offence. The use of it (I must confess) is in some cases prohibited by St. Austin, a man too modest to usurp greater authority than he had; and œcumenical authority in this point he had none, or none so great as might impose silence upon all posterity. Would to God such as are most forward to press us with this reverend father's interlocutory sentence, once or twice perhaps uttered for not using the name, could be persuaded to stand to his definitive sentence often pronounced against the nature of the error which the heathens, against whom he disputes, covered under this name! Upon condition they would be pleased not to revive the nature of the error, or bury their opinions that way tending, my heart and mouth should never give breath unto the name. The opinion which some rigid Stoicks had of fate is an heresy not to be named among the heathen; so deeply tainted with the very

dregs of heathenism, that it is a wonder any Christian writer should come near it, that any at least should take infection from it; especially seeing the reverend and learned fathers of the primitive church had provided so many excellent preservatives against it. But albeit *fate*, according to that sense or meaning wherein some heathens took it, was become a wicked idol; yet seeing the word or name, whether in the ordinary use of Greek or Latin writers, hath greater variety of significations or importances than almost any other word in the world besides; to abandon all for one ill sense or importance, seems to me as rude and uncivil a part, as to root out a whole clan or surname, because one of the same name and stock had been at deadly foehood with our family, or had otherwise deserved 176
death. Upon diligent perusal of the best philosophers, historians, or poets, amongst the heathens, of some historians and moralists of best note amongst Christians, we may find realities or solid matter answering to this word *fate*, which cannot be so well expressed by any other term or name, by any paraphrase more brief than the true and proper definition of the matter or reality signified by it. Now if the matter defined prove to be no idol, the name certainly is indifferent, and of the definition there may be a good moral or historical use. For finding out the true and proper definition or description of it, we are to explicate the divers acceptions or importances of the name.

2. *Fatum a fando dictum*, and sometimes imports no more than the dictate of nature, or the certain course appointed to things natural. Thus natural death is by some accounted fatal. And Dido, according to this importance, did not die by fate, because she prevented Lachesis, by cutting the thread of her own life before

this great arbitress of mortality had passed sentence upon her;

Sed quia nec fato, merita nec morte peribat [k].

And according to this importance it is used by the prince of Roman historians in the sixth book of his Annals; *Per idem tempus Lucius Piso pontifex (rarum in tanta claritudine) fato obiit;* "About the same time L. Piso, high-priest, died a natural death (being eighty years of age); a matter rare in those times in a man of so great birth and place." Sometimes again death itself, howsoever it come upon men, is termed *fate* or *destiny;* perhaps because the coming of it is by course of nature certain, albeit the time and manner of it be unknown or incomprehensible. So another Roman poet saith, 'The Parthians' poisoned arrows carried fates upon their points, able to let in death at the least breach of skin, *Fatumque in sanguine summo est.*' It may be Virgil held natural death to be fatal, because it cannot be avoided; being otherwise of our opinion, that Dido might have lived longer, or that it was not absolutely necessary from the hour of her birth that she should live so many years and no more [l]. For so some of the wisest amongst the heathens held death to be fatal, that is, simply necessary unto all; albeit to die at this or that set hour were in their opinion contingent, or at least supposed a contingency before it became necessary. Of this opinion was Pythagoras [m] and his followers. And so

[k] Virgil. 4. Æneid. ver. 696. Vid. Cælium Rhodiginum, lib. 21. cap. 4. pag. (972.) 802.

[l] See chap. 23. §. 2.

[m] That death itself is fatal, Pythagoras supposeth in those verses;

Jura colas non ore tenus; sed rebus et ipsis:
Nec pravis mentem suescas rationibus uti:
Sed mortem fato subituros noveris omnes:
Divitias quandoque dari; quandoque perire.

That

it seems was Justin Martyr[n]. But Lucan, we know, was somewhat allied unto the Stoicks, and out of his private conceit, that the set time or manner of every man's death was no less necessary than death itself, he might, not inconsequently, term violent or sudden death fatal. And Tacitus, who seems to be doubtful whether all things fell out by fate or necessity, or no, ascribes violent and undeserved death, as well as 177
natural, unto fate. For, speaking of Agricola's untimely death (as we would term it), he saith, *Constans et libens fatum accepit*, " He constantly and willingly entertained his fate." Martial's conceit concerning death and fates is not much different from Lucan's, or this last cited place of Tacitus, though not altogether the same :

Nullo fata loco possis excludere : cum mors
Venerit, in medio Tybure Sardinia est.

From fates no place is privileg'd,
But when death is their doom
The pestilent Sardinia
In Tybur findeth room.

And as death, in his opinion, could not be repelled where fates had granted his admission, so neither

That disastrous or untimely death was not fatal, but preventable, he supposeth in the verses following, for he calleth all calamities *Divina infortunia*. See Hierocles upon both places, pp. 83. 109. See his Annotations upon the latter, chap. 21. of this book, parag. 1.

[n] *Quæst.* 32. Si Deus mortalem naturam nostram fecit, cur Deum mortem non fecisse dicis ? *Explicatio.* Non si quid est mortale natura, id omnino mori necesse est. Argumento sunt Enoch et Elias, qui cum natura mortales sint, in immortalitate etiam manent superiores excelsioresque effecti quam ad quos elogium illud pertineat, *Terra es, et in terram reverteris.* Verum est igitur, naturam nostram a Deo factam esse mortalem, mortemque invectam esse in mundum hominis inobedientia. Si enim Deus ut naturam fecit mortalem, sic etiam mortem fecisset, non inobedientia mortem induxisset : ac si Deus inobedientiam non fecit, ne mortem quidem fecit.

could it be obtruded or admitted without the leave or approbation of fates, if the authority of the father of poets be authentic:

Δαιμονίη, μή μοί τι λίην ἀκαχίζεο θυμῷ·
Οὐ γάρ τίς μ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν ἀνὴρ ἅϊδι προϊάψει.
Μοῖραν δ' οὔτινά φημι πεφευγμένον ἔμμεναι ἀνδρῶν,
Οὐ κακὸν, οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν.[o]

Vex not thy soul; for none can send
Me to my grave before
My day be come, since all men's lives
Run on a fatal score
Which none may pass, none not make up:
'Tis not man's power or will
Can change the period which is set,
As well to th' good as th' ill.

Virgil was somewhat of a better mind in this point than Homer was, or they are which can thus liberally dispose of their friends' bodies or bones:

Similis si cura fuisset,
Tum quoque fas nobis Teucros armare fuisset;
Nec pater omnipotens Trojam, nec fata vetabant
Stare, decemque alios Priamum superesse per annos[p].

Had like care been, nor mighty Jove
Nor fates did foreordain
Or Troy to fall or Priamus
Not ten years more to reign.

3. That no man can die before his day come, is an opinion in whose truth some are so confident, as they will not stick to bequeath the bones of their dearest friends unto the devil, if they should die otherwise; and it is certain all things have their appointed time; yet may we not hence collect that no man can live longer or die sooner than he doth, or that the number
178 of his days cannot possibly be diminished or increased:

[o] Homer. Iliad. vi. 486. [p] Virgil. Æneid. lib. viii. ver. 396.

but of this argument see Justin Martyr[q], or the author of the questions and explications which have for a long time gone under his name. In all these or the like acceptions of fate, and the very common conceit which this name suggests, there is an importance of necessity; and according to the several degrees of necessity, fates good or bad (for so they divided them for their quality) were subdivided into *majora et minora*, into lesser and greater fates: *fata minora*, lesser fates, were held alterable by enchantment or other curious practices, taught by Satan as imitations of those sacred rites or solemnities which God had ordained for averting imminent plagues: *fata majora*, chief or supreme fates, were so unalterable, so inflexible, that their great god Jupiter could not command them, but was to do whatsoever was designed by them to be done. Whence, as Lactantius wittily collects, they could not rightly enstyle him Maximus, because he was less than this kind of fate. In this heathenish division notwithstanding, there was a true glimpse of

[q] *Quæstio* 33. Si hominum natura ut mortalis, proprium ac suum finem agnoscit, tempus autem uniuscujusque non est certi cujusdam termini; quod quidem fatum vocant ii qui a religione nostra abhorrent: quomodo Ezechiæ addita sunt tempora? Quod enim additum est, in præfinito determinatoque numero certe sumitur. Unde igitur in morientibus incertum interminatumque tempus docetur? *Explicatio.* Non esse uniuscujusque tempus certum ac definitum, his divinæ scripturæ verbis docetur, *Si in campo invenerit homo puellam desponsatam, eique vi illata dormierit: virum quidem interficite, puellam autem ne interficite. Mores enim corrupit homo proximi sui, eumque pulsans non erat qui juvaret, atque ita hæc res accidit. Et puella clamavit, nec fuit qui ei auxilium ferret.* Non autem divina scriptura violatum thorum coactæ morti comparasset, si mors certa definitaque fuisset. Quod enim apud Deum definitum est, id nec violari, nec transiri potest. Quod si ita est, profecto definitæ Ezechiæ vitæ tempora vitæ non sunt addita, sed annis ejus qui indefinite occupaverant, quorum finis morbo lethali eveniebat, nisi Deus morbum ejus curasset, eumque ad vitam revocavisset.—Justin. Martyr. explicat. (p. 29.)

a Christian truth, hereafter and elsewhere to be discussed. Subordinate to this division of fates were the opinions of the Chaldæan and Egyptian astrologers concerning the power or efficacy of the heavens over sublunary bodies. The Chaldæans[r] were impious, not in practice only, but in opinion, in that they held the operation of the heavens to be unalterable and unpreventable by the wit, industry, or skill of man: all which, such as follow Ptolemy the Egyptian expressly deny, and bring good reasons for their denial. If their practices to foretell things to come be no worse than their opinions concerning the manner how they come to pass, it would be no great sin to be their scholars.

4. There is no Christian but will grant his God to be greater than heathenish fate, and his law to be above all control of any other law or power whatsoever; and yet by the doctrine of many divines, the almighty Lawgiver is made eternally subject to his own decrees. Their meaning is taken by many to be in effect this: that albeit God be omnipotent, yet it is true of him,

Post semel emissum volat irrevocabile verbum,

that he had passed his omnipotent word concerning the ordering and managing of all things to come, before it could be taken or accepted by any creature; and that by his word thus passed once for all for ever, such irrevocable doom had passed upon some of his best creatures before their nonage, (in their nonexistence,) as they would not have accepted life or being itself, when they first entered upon possession of it, if they had known upon what hard conditions it had been tendered; or were it yet left free for them to disclaim those covenants or conditions of life and being where-

[r] Vide Bellantium.

unto they never gave their consent, the greatest part of divine goodness which they could hope to be partakers of, were to be released from the right of crea- 179
tures, and to return again to nothing. Briefly, by making God supreme Lord of such hard weirds or sinister fates, as are by these men inevitably awarded to absolute reprobates, they do not add so much unto his greatness, as they derogate from his goodness, in respect of the heathen gods. For unto such of the heathens as granted fates a negative voice in some cases against the good purposes of their gods, it was some comfort to think that their gods wished them well, and did entreat them as great personages or courteous gentlemen do their suitors, whom for the present they cannot pleasure, as being overborne by the opposite faction. But, alas! what can it boot poor impotent man to believe his Maker was not from eternity subject to fates, or any other law, if by his own laws, or decrees, he hath bound them before the world had beginning, (without all hope or possibility of release,) to harder conditions of life than the heathens imagined could be enjoined by fates? for it is probable that such of the heathen as were most peremptory for the absolute necessity of fatal events, did think bad fates had spit their poison when this life was ended. They did not suspect the miseries inflicted by them to be for time so everlasting, or for their quality so unsufferable, as we Christians believe the torments of the life to come shall be to all that are ordained for the day of wrath. But be the torments for their quality more exquisite than the heathens could conceive any, was it absolutely necessary for the Almighty from eternity to appoint them? If so it were, there was a fatal necessity precedent to the Almighty decree. But if his decree hath brought this absolute necessity

upon men, the execution of this decree by instrumental or second causes differs nothing, save only in excess of rigour and severity, from the most rigid Stoical fate.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Affinity or Alliance which Fates had to Necessity, to Fortune, or Chance, in the Opinion of Heathen Writers.

1. But that we may find out, which we most desire, some mitigation or tolerable reconciliation of the most harsh opinions, whether maintained by heathens or Christians in this argument; it is a common notion, received by all, that every fatal event is necessary, but very few of the heathen were of opinion that all necessary events were fatal. Albeit by way of such a poetical license in substituting the special for the general, as he used that said,

Hunc ego si potui tantum sperare dolorem,

fate is sometimes taken for necessity without restriction. It was not usual with ancient heathens, nor is it with such as to this day use to ascribe many events to fates, to term the rising or setting of the sun, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, or other like effects of hourly observation, (necessary by the common course of nature,) fatal. In the literal construction of many good writers, fate and fortune are, if not synonymal in their formal, prime, or direct significations, yet coincident in their importances or connotations[s].

[s] *At vos, O superi, et divûm tu maxime rector*
Jupiter, Arcadii, quæso, miserescite regis,
Et patrias audite preces. Si numina vestra
Incolumem Pallanta mihi, si fata reservant,
Si visurus eum vivo, et venturus in unum;
Vitam oro: patiar quemvis durare laborem.
Sin aliquem infandum casum, Fortuna, minaris;
Nunc, O nunc liceat crudelem abrumpere vitam.
Virgil. Æneid. viii. 572.

Their titles to the selfsame events or effects were oft-times undistinguishable by such as ascribe too much to the one or to the other. Ausonius, but for verse sake, might as well have said, *Dum vult fortuna*, as,

Dum fata volunt, bina venena juvant.

When such success the fates shall will,
One poison shall another kill.

Or Juvenal as well, *Si fata velint*, as,

Si fortuna volet, fies de rhetore consul:
Si volet hæc eadem, fies de consule rhetor.

Of rhetorician whom she will
Dame Fortune consul makes;
And when she will, to meaner state
Her favourite down she takes.

Others held fortune to be a branch of fate, or an instrument for executing what was by fates designed.

Quid referam Cannas? admotaque mœnibus arma[t]*?*
Varronemque pigrum, magnum quod vivere posset
Postque tuos Thrasimnene lacus? Fabiumque morantem
Accepisse jugum victas Carthaginis arces?
Spectatum Hannibalem nostris cecidisse catenis?
Exiliumque Rogi furtiva morte luisse?
Adde etiam Italicas vires, Romamque suismet
Pugnantem membris, adjice et civilia bella:
Et Cimbrum in Mario, Mariumque in carcere victum:
Quod consul totiens exulque ex exule consul:
Et jacuit Libicis compar jactura ruinis
Atque erepidinibus cepit Carthaginis orbem:
Hoc nisi fata darent, nunquam fortuna tulisset[t].

The resultance of this long oration is no more than this: Fortune was but the messenger to bring all those welcome or unwelcome presents to the Roman state, which fate did bestow upon it. Of this argument see more in the 27th chapter of this book, parag. 2, 7, 8, 10—14.

[t] Manil. lib. 4. cap. 1.

2. In Tacitus's language, fate and fortune have sometimes the same reference or importance. *Occulta lege fati, et ostentis ac responsis destinatum Vespasiano liberisque ejus imperium post fortunam credidimus:* "After his good fortune, we surely believed that the empire was by the secret course of fate, by signs and oracles, destinated to Vespasian and his son." Tacit. 1. Histor. cap. 10. Yet is not this difference betwixt fate and fortune constantly observed by these two writers themselves, much less observed at all by others: with Cominæus, Machiavel, and other later historians or politicians, fortune and fate are used promiscuously. The properties or attributes of fate are
181 in ordinary construction the same, or equivalent to those of fortune. The titles of fate were anciently these or the like, *unavoidable*, *insuperable*, *inflexible*, *ineluctable;* and it is a conceit or prenotion, that to this day runs in many Christians' minds, that nothing can be against a chance; 'Where fortune fails, nothing prevails.' This difference notwithstanding betwixt them might be observed in many writers, (or in their language, which have cause, in their own apprehensions, to like well or complain of them,) 'that the ordinary success of others' labours or consultations are for the most part ascribed by envy or emulation unto fortune;' whereas fates are usually charged with the calamities or disasters which befall themselves, or such as rely upon their counsels. Most men are by nature prone to excuse themselves in their worst actions, *si non a toto*, yet *a tanto*, by accusing fortune; and can be well content to exonerate their galled consciences of inward grief, by venting bitter complaints, or receiving plausible informations from others, against fates. *Attonitis etiam victoribus, qui vocem precesque adhibere non ausi, lacrymis ac silentio veniam poscebant,*

donec Cerealis mulceret animos, fato acta dictitans, quæ militum ducumque discordia, vel fraude hostium evenissent. Tacitus, lib. 4. Histor. cap. 72. "Even the conquerors were astonished at the sight, who not daring to speak, begged their pardon with silence and tears, till such time as Cerealis with comfortable words revived their spirits, affirming, that those things which indeed came to pass through the mutinousness of the soldiers, or the dissension of the leaders, or the malice of the enemies, were but fatal mischances which could not be escaped."

3. Some again derive fate and fortune from one and the same fountain, and distinguish them only by excess of strength, as the same stream in winter differs from itself in drought of summer. *Advertendum vero illud, quandocunque illa cœlestium causarum ratio ita digeritur ut artem exculcatam exsuperet, dici a Platonicis Fatum: ubi vero sic, ut vincere inertem desidiosumque evaleat rursum a solerti strenuoque vinci, fortunam. Utrobique vero divinam statuunt providentiam, quæ ad finem agat sibi soli notum, quæque universa modis contemperet occultioribus*[u]. Lection. Antiquar. lib. 10. cap. 20. The Platonicks, which derive most human events or success from the order or disposition of celestial causes, call this disposition *fate*, when it is so strong that no endeavours or skill of man can prevail against it; but when the strength of it is of such a middle size as may prevail against slothful and careless men, but may be vanquished by the vigilant and industrious, they call the same disposition *fortune*. In both cases they admit a Divine Providence, which worketh to ends known only to itself.

4. For this affinity between *fortune, chance,* and *fate* in best writers, it will be expedient to touch at

[u] Cælius Rhodigin. lection. antiq. lib. 10. c. 20. p. 382.

the seat of chance or fortune in our way, and to declare what is meant by these terms; and whether such events as we say fall out by fortune or chance have any alliance with necessity. In this discussion I hope we shall arrive at that point whereat the favourers of absolute necessity, and the favourers of other opinions concerning fate and fortune, more fluctuant, will be content to cast anchor. Fortune (saith Plutarch[z]) is
182 a part of chance, as freewill or choice is of contingency. Every casual event is contingent, but every contingent effect is not casual, or a chance: αὐτομάτον, *quasi* αὐτὸ μάτην. The very name of *chance* in Greek (saith Aristotle) implies as much as to be to no end or purpose: yet this etymology (under correction) was no part of the ancients' meaning, which gave the Greek name αὐτομάτον to such events as we term casual, unless μάτην, *frustra*, be referred only (as perhaps Aristotle intended) to the efficient cause. After a manner of speech not much unlike to this, the school-

[z] Casus autem latius patet quam fortuna: quando et eam complectitur, et multa alia quæ alias aliter accidere suapte natura possunt. Ipsum nomen hoc indicat. Est enim αὐτομάτον Græcis quod ultro et a se fit: intelligiturque casus, quum quod alterius causa fieri solet, fit non propter illam causam, quale frigus sub caniculæ ortum esse videtur non enim frustra, neque denique sicut quod est in nostra potestate, pars est contingentis: sic fortuna pars est casus. Utque casus contingenti, ita iis quæ in nostra sunt potestate, fortuna accidit: non omnibus tamen, sed in quibus consilium delectusque adhibentur, uti diximus. Proinde casus communis est animatorum et animæ expertium: fortuna hominis est propria, ejus qui jam agere possit. Idque hinc constat, quod fortunatum esse et fœlicem esse pro eodem habentur, et fœlicitas est quædam agendi dexteritas: hæc autem solius est perfecti hominis. Quæ ergo fato comprehenduntur, hæc sunt: contingens, possibile, delectus, in nostra situm potestate, fortuna, casus, iisque adjuncta, de quibus est etiam * fortassis, et perinde: quæ omnia continentur quidem fato, nullum autem eorum fatale est.—Plutarch. de Fato, pag. (418, 419.) tom. ii. 572. d. Fatum tamen sub providentia comprehendit.

* Τὸ τάχα καὶ τὸ ἴσως.

men say that is *gratis dictum*, (as we would say *freely spoken*,) not for which a man takes no fee, but for which he hath no just ground or reason: and that in phrase of scripture is said to be done *gratis* or *frustra* which is done without just motives or provocation, not that which is done or attempted to no end or purpose. *Oderunt me frustra*, and *Oderunt me gratis*, "They hated me without a cause," or "They hated me vainly," are in some translations equivalent. The word in the original answers to both. In analogy to this kind of speech, those events were said to fall out by chance, or to be αὐτοματὰ, which in the opinion of such as gave this name had no efficient cause, or at least none discernible, but were supposed to move themselves, or to take possession of such short being as they had, without the assignment of any superior power, or of any constant or settled cause; intruding themselves into the course of nature, like unbidden guests, sometimes as unwelcome as frost in summer, sometimes as welcome as warm weather to such as want fire in winter.

5. Fortune hath her authority placed only in reasonable actions or deliberations[a], yet not in all these, but

[a] Plato fortunam causam in propositis constitutisque per accidentiam et consequutionem. Aristoteles, causam per accidens in iis quæ ex animi appetentia propter quid fiunt, obscuram illam quidem et instabilem. Differre autem a fortuna spontaneum temerariumque casum. Quod enim a fortuna, idem a temeritate quoque fieri: hocque gerendis in rebus esse. Quod autem temerarium spontaneumque sit, non continuo idem a fortuna fieri, idque citra omnem rerum administrationem usu venire. Porro fortunam rationalium esse; sponsis autem casum, tum rationalium, tum rationis expertium animantium, tum inanimatorum corporum. Epicurus, causam non sibi constantem, personis, temporibus, modis: Anaxagoras et Stoici, indeprehensam humano captui causam. Siquidem eventorum quædam e necessitate, quædam e fato quædam ex libero et constituto, quædam e fortuna nonnulla e suæ spontis casu.—Plutarch. de placitis et decretis Philosoph. lib. 1. p. (213.) tom. ii. 885. cap. 29.

only in such events as fall out either so far beyond or contrary to men's intentions, that they may be rather wondered at than expected. If husbandmen should dig their vineyards with purpose to find gold, the fruitful vintage thereon following (though no part of their intentions) could not so properly be ascribed to fortune, as if a husbandman, intending only to dig his vineyard in hope of a plentiful vintage, should find store of gold.

6. The meaning of Plato, of Aristotle, and Plutarch, may be better perceived by fit instance, than by large scholastic commentaries upon their several definitions of fortune. Valerius Maximus (and to my remembrance Plutarch) hath a memorable story of one Jason Phereus, that was cured of an imposthume in a fray or duel. The blow of an enemy was the cause of this man's health, but by a rare and unusual accident, quite contrary to his intention that gave it; and altogether beyond his expectation that received it: his purpose was only to maintain his reputation or revenge his wrongs, either to wound or to be wounded, without any hope or thought of curing his disease, the danger whereof was not fully discovered till it was past. But a more perfect idea or exemplary form of fortune, good or bad, than any historian relates, the Greek epigrammatist hath pictured for our contemplation: the matter of the epigram was in English thus: A silly poor wretch, being deprived of all means to live, resolves to deprive himself of breath; but,
183 whilst he sought a place convenient for acting this desperate purpose, finding store of gold which another had hid, he returned home again, leaving his halter in the place, which was worse taken by him that hid the gold than meant by him that left it; for he hanged himself in it for grief of his loss.

Χρυσὸν ἀνὴρ εὑρὼν ἔλιπε βρόχον, αὐτὰρ ὁ χρυσὸν
Ὃν λίπεν οὐχ εὑρὼν, ἦψεν ὃν εὗρε βρόχον.

A poor wretch finding gold, for joy
Left's halter in its stead;
Which he that left the gold for grief
Did make his fatal thread.

To find gold was no part of that poor man's hopes, whom despair of like means to live by had made desirous of death: the other had as little mind to dispatch himself, when he came to visit the supposed stay and comfort of his life, wherein his soul had solaced herself with the fool in the Gospel.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the proper Subject and Nature of Fate.

1. THE most useful issue which these or the like cases afford is this, whether the event specified in them be merely casual, contingent, or (in some sort) necessary: one and the same determination will as well befit the like question, concerning such events as are properly termed fatal, whose proper subject, nature, and definition we are more particularly to inquire after. The first query, which few meddle withal, would be this: whether fatal events participate more of contingency than of necessity. But setting aside all comparison, it sufficeth us that they truly participate of both, but in different degrees or measures, according to the diversity of times. Contingency is always as necessarily presupposed to the production of events fatal, as necessity is included in them; and as the proper form or essence of fates consists not in every sort of necessity, but in some peculiar branch thereof, so neither is every contingent subject a fit matter for receiving that form or branch of necessity, wherein the

nature of fate consists, and which gives denomination and being to events fatal. I have heard many unthrifts, upon the losing of a fair game at tables, curse the dice, or cry vengeance upon ill luck; but I never heard any gamester frame such endictments either in verse or prose against fates, as were usual amongst the heathens, whose language in other cases is with our unthrifts most familiar. Such petty adventures as cards and dice are as metal too base to be instamped with the inscription of fate; whose proper subject in public affairs is matter either of tragedy or triumph; in private, matter either of extraordinary and unusual prosperity or of calamity.

Most of God's creatures are the subject of contingency; mankind only, or human society, is the proper
184 sphere, without whose circumference neither fortune or fatal events do wander. Yet is not every part of man subject to fate, though man according to every part be subject to that contingency which is presupposed to fates. Justin Martyr[b], though a professed

[b] Si fato fieret, ut esset aut improbus, aut bonus; profecto contraria in eum cadere nunquam possent, nec sæpissime mutaretur; quin nec alii quidem probi essent, alii mali: alioqui fatum causam malorum esse, contrariaque sibi facere sentiremus, aut illud quod ante dictum est, videri verum esse, nihil esse virtutem nec vitium sed opinione solum bona, et mala judicari: quæ, ut vera ratio docet, maxima est et impietas et injustitia. Verum fatum hoc immutabile esse dicimus, iis qui præclaras bonasque res eligunt, ac sibi proponunt, digna præmia, itemque iis qui contraria, digna præmia constituens. Non enim ut alia, veluti arbores et quadrupedes, quæ nihil voluntate et judicio facere possunt, sic hominem Deus condidit. Neque enim præmio ac laude dignus esset, si per se, et a se, bonum non deligeret, sed bonus factus esset: nec si malus esset, jure supplicio afficeretur, cum non a se talis esset, sed aliud nihil esse posset, nisi quod factus fuisset.—Justin. Martyr. Apolog. 2. pro Christ. p. (32.) 80. Itaque Deus non est sic mundum deleturus et eversurus, ut nulli sint jam futuri improbi angeli, dæmones, et homines, propter Christianorum semen et genus, quod ipsum causam rerum esse intelligit. Nam nisi hoc esset, ne vobis quidem hæc jam a malis geniis fieri ullo modo possent, sed ignis judicii delapsus omnia dissi-

enemy to Stoical fates, and a most valiant champion, a chief leader to all the rest which have defended the Christian truth against that sect, being most potent in the infancy of Christianity, was not so nice, as either to deny us the right use of the name *fate*, or the nature of the thing thereby signified. "This," saith he, "is immutable fate, that such as do well shall be rewarded, and such as do ill shall be punished." *Quid aliud est fatum*, saith Minucius Felix, *quam quod de unoquoque nostrum Deus fatus est, qui cum possit præscire materiam, pro meritis et qualitatibus singulorum, etiam fata determinavit.* Both of them follow their master, St. Paul, that *God will render to every man according to his works: unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; tribulation and anguish shall be upon the soul of every man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Grecian: but to every man that doeth good, shall be glory and honour and peace, to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian: for there is no respect of persons with God.* Rom. ii. 8—11. It is a point clear from the authority of Minucius Felix and Justin Martyr, and from the grounds of Christianity itself, that the reasonable soul is not sub-

paret et incenderet, quemadmodum etiam eluvies superioribus seculis nemini pepercit, nisi uni illi qui a nobis Nochus appellatur, a vobis Deucalion, ejusque familiæ, ex quo rursus tam multi nati sunt quorum partim improbi, partim boni fuerunt. Sic enim conflagrationem fore censemus, non, ut Stoicis placet, omnium rerum inter ipsas mutatione, quod turpissimum videtur: nec fato homines facere aut pati quicquam eorum quæ fiunt et eveniunt, judicamus, sed voluntate ac judicio unumquemque bene agere aut peccare: malorumque geniorum opera bonos, veluti Socratem ejusque similes exagitari et in vincula conjici: Sardanapalum autem, Epicurum ac similes in rerum abundantia et gloria beatæ vitæ compotes videri: quod cum non intellexissent Stoici, fati necessitate fieri omnia censuerunt.—Just. Mart. Apol. 1. pro Christ. pag. (8.) 45. b.

ject to fate[b], taken (in the Stoical sense) for absolute necessity, whence soever such necessity be derived: for as Justin Martyr strongly concludes, if the soul of man were by the necessity of the Divine decree either violently driven or placidly drawn to good or evil, there could be no vice or virtue, or God should be as truly the only author of all vice, sin, and wickedness, as he is of virtue and godliness; or, as St. Austin infers, he could not justly punish any besides himself, who is altogether incapable of punishment, but more uncapable of deserving it, or of doing evil. That freedom of choice or contingency which these good writers, with all the ancients suppose, as granted by the Divine decree to the human soul, is the proper subject or immediate matter whereto fate is limited. The nature or essence of fate, in their doctrine, consists in the infallible doom or sentence passed by the Divine providence upon men's actions, according to their nature or quality. The actions or choices themselves are truly and properly contingent, not fatal; the events or issues of them are fatal, not contingent: and in this sense did
185 most of the heathens[c], in their sober moods, use the

[b] Rhodiginus lection. Antiquar. lib. 10. cap. 20. p. 182. b. Cæterum quo planius fati ratio pernoscatur, ita omnino colligendum, sicuti animi rationalis summus Creator est Deus, atque idem gubernator, ita et corporis genitor est mundus, ac moderator. Unde consequitur illud, uti animus velut Dei filius ab Deo, tanquam a patre, providentiæ legibus clementer agatur, et suaviter. Corpus vero, ut mundi membrum a mundano corpore fati viribus, velut particula quædam ab mole tota impetu quodam trahatur violento: unde fit, uti in mentem nulla prorsum fati vis queat assultare, nisi quatenus corpori ipsa se fatalibus obnoxio legibus, addixerit. Propterea semper fere divinus Plato ab corporis amore, ac externorum cura ad animi et Dei cultum præcipit defugiendum, quando non alia ratione declinari mala queunt.

[c] Neque enim si non esset, providentia, ordo ille in mundo existeret, quod fatum possit aliquis appellare: nec si ista deessent, ulla esset mulcta ullumque adversus sceleratos judicium: immo nec bonorum præmium, nec commendatio. At vero, providentia atque ordine existen-

name of fatos. So Virgil ascribes the want of an [d] heir male by the untimely death of the firstborn, and the ill[e] success of war unseasonably undertaken, or begun (as a man would say) in an ill time, unto the fates, or

tibus, omnes oportebat qui jam nascuntur eadem bona Sortiri; si nihil a seipsis ad inæqualitatem contulissent.—Hierocles in Carm. Pythag. p. 127. And again, p. 136. Tot tantaque adeo ex versibus istis possumus haurire præcepta quæ ad virtutis institutionem primam conferunt. Videntur enim et providentiæ, et fati, liberatisque animi verissimas rationes complecti; quibus molestiam illam, quæ in eorum, quæ cernuntur, dissimilitudine versatur, oratio examinavit; inque omnibus malorum causam Deum nequaquam existere demonstravit. That fates may stand with freedom of election in man, Tacitus observes out of the ancient heathens: Sed mihi hæc, ac talia audienti, in incerto judicium est, fatone res mortalium et necessitate immutabili, an forte voluantur. Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum æmulantur, diversos reperies: ac multis insitam opinionem, non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines diisque curæ. Ideo creberrima et tristia in bonos, læta apud deteriores esse; contra alii, fatum quidem congruere rebus putant, sed non e vagis stellis, verum apud principia et nexus naturalium causarum, ac tamen electionem vitæ nobis relinquunt: quam ubi elegeris, rertum imminentium ordinem. Neque mala vel bona, quæ vulgus putet: multos qui conflictari adversis videantur, beatos: ac plerosque quamquam magnas per opes, miserrimos: si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prospera inconsulte utantur. Cæterum plurimis mortalium non eximi, quo primo cujusque ortu ventura destinentur: sed quædam secus quam dicta sint cadere, fallaciis ignara dicentium, ita corrumpi fidem artis, cujus clara documenta, et antiqua ætas et nostra tulerit. Quippe a filio ejusdem Trasulli, prædictum Neronis imperium in tempore memorabitur, ne nunc inceptolongiusabierim.—Cornel. Tacit. lib. 6. Annal. cap. 22.

[d] Æneid. vii. 50:

Filius huic, fato divûm, prolesque virilis
Nulla fuit, primaque oriens erepta juventa est.

[e] Virgil. Æneid. vii. 582:

Undique collecti coeunt, Martemque fatigant.
Ilicet infandum cuncti contra omina bellum,
Contra fata deûm, perverso numine poscunt;
Certatim regis circumstant tecta Latini.
Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit,
[Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore,]
Quæ sese, multis circum latrantibus undis,
Mole tenet; scopuli nequidquam et spumea circum
Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

weirds allotted by the gods. The feigned complaint or speech which he puts in Latinus's mouth, dissuading[f] Turnus and his people from going to war, is a true picture of Moses's expostulation with the Israelites, which had gone out to war contrary to God's commandment, and found that success by experience which Latinus forewarns Turnus of: *Ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the Lord, we will go up and fight, according to all that the Lord our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up every man into the hill. And the Lord said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies. So I spake unto you; and you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah. And ye returned and wept before the Lord; but the Lord would not hearken unto your voice, nor give ear unto you.* Deut. i. 41—45.

Plagues or punishments are properly then termed fatal, when God will not repent or change the doom threatened; when his eyes are shut unto men's tears, and his ears unto their prayers. But of all the heathens which I have read, this point is most divinely

[f] Verum, ubi nulla datur cæcum exsuperare potestas
Consilium, et sæve nutu Junonis eunt res;
Multa Deos aurasque pater testatus inanes,
'Frangimur heu fatis,' inquit, 'ferimurque procella!
Ipsi has sacrilego pendetis sanguine pœnas,
O miseri. Te, Turne, nefas, te triste manebit
Supplicium; votisque deos venerabere seris.'
Æn. vii. 592.

discussed by Hierocles[g] in his Commentary upon Pythagoras' golden verses. "If calamity," saith he, "be the award of divine power, Pythagoras might better have called it divine will, than divine misfortune." If it be not the award of divine power, it had been enough to have called it misfortune; a divine misfortune it cannot be. Out of these straits he winds himself with this acute distinction: 'Inasmuch as calamity or vengeance is the award of divine power, it is in this respect rightly called divine.' But with reference to this or that particular man, it is a misfor- 186
tune. His meaning, as he elsewhere illustrates himself, is this: The Divine Power (as every just judge) doth only intend to punish evil; suppose adultery, murder, incest, &c.: but that this or that man should commit these or the like evils, which necessarily draw calamity upon themselves, this is contingent. Now the necessary award of a contingent evil is by the Pythagoreans sometimes termed *fate*, sometimes *divine misfortune*.

g Si quidem per se alteri quidem divitias: alteri autem paupertatem, divinum judicium tribuit: *Divinam* voluntatem nominari istud oportuit, non *infortunium*. Sin autem nihil hujusmodi nominibus imperat; sed fortuito et temere accidit, ut felix iste sit, sicuti dicunt; ille autem infelix: *Infortunium* vocare tantummodo istud oportuit; non *Divinum infortunium*. Sin porro Deus arbiter unicuique tribuit, quod meritis convenit; neque in causa est, ut tales ipsi simus; sed eo fine tantum justitiam possidet, ut ex præscripto ipsius, gestis paria referat: non immerito conjunctis nominibus judicii decreta *Divina infortunia* nuncupat: sive, (quia Divinum sit judicium, atque intelligens) præponendum putarit quod *Divinitatem* atque scientiam demonstret: sive etiam (quod sponte malitiam idipsum amplectatur, de quo agitur, unde etiam calamitatibus istis dignum est) *infortuniorum nomen* adjecerit, tanquam non ex professo certum hominem vel supplicio, vel præmio afficere Deus statuat; sed eum semper, qui isto se, atque illo modo gesserit; cujus rei causa non sit extra nos investiganda. Itaque voluntatis nostræ, divinique judicii nexum *infortunium* parere, nihilque aliud totum hoc *Divinum* existere *infortunium*, quam Dei adversus peccata calculum.—Hieroc. in aurea Pythag. carmina, pag. 111.

2. Not to interpose aught one way or other prejudicial to the different opinions concerning freewill, as it hath reference to merit, election, or predestination, (for all which points we have allotted a peculiar place in this long work,) we hold it for the present as a part of our creed, or fundamental point of Christianity, that man, in respect of some objects, hath a true freedom of choice or contingency, and is enabled by his Creator to make variety of antecedents in thought, word, or deed. But the antecedents[h] being once made by man, though not without divine cooperation, God alone allots the consequents, without any concurrence or suffrage in man. To repair to God's house, or loiter at home or in worse places, on the Lord's day, is left free unto us by the divine decree; but what good or evil, spiritual or temporal, shall befall us upon our better or worse choice, is entirely and merely in the hands of God. We have no power or freedom to resist the doom or sentence which God hath appointed to our resolutions, be they good or bad. As unto evil or goodness, indefinitely taken, some measure of reward or punishment is, in the language of Justin Martyr and other of the ancients, truly fatal; so every [i]possible degree of good or evil, whether merely moral or spiritual, hath success from eternity fitted to it, *quoad pondus*, in mea-

[h] See chap. 24. §. 11.

[i] Nos ita judicandum humanum genus a Christo dicimus, ut tamen etiam nunc omnia Deum, prout rationabile putat, regere ac dispensare credamus: et ita in futuro judicio judicaturum, affirmamus, ut tamen semper etiam in hoc seculo judicasse doceamus. Dum enim semper gubernat Deus, semper et judicat: quia gubernatio ipsa est judicium.—Salvian. lib. 1. pag. 11. And again: Ideo etiam sanctos homines castigatos quondam judicio Dei legimus, et judicandos nos, Deo judice, etiam præsenti seculo nosceremus; quia sicut Deus est semper, sic justitia Dei semper: sicut omnipotentia Domini indeficiens, sic censura indemutabilis: sicut Deus jure perpetuus, sic justitia perseverans.—Salvian. lib. 2. pag. 39.

sure more exact than the cunningest arithmetician can devise. God's justice holds one scale, his mercy and bounty the other; their several awards are most exact, most infallible and irresistible, yet alternant. Punishment or chastisement for offences past is necessary, yet not absolutely necessary to any man's person in this or that degree, because the eternal decree hath left him a possibility not to offend in this or that kind, or not to offend in such a degree; or in case he so offended, to seek for pardon. Nor shall we by this assertion be enforced to imagine any new act or determination in God, either for daily awarding different success, or the same success in different measure, according to the diversity or contingency of human choice, which may vary every moment: for the infinite, incomprehensible, and all comprising essence, as is before observed[k], is fitness itself; an unchangeable rule eternally fitting every alteration possible to the creature, without any alteration in itself: a rule it is which needs no application to the event, the event, by getting existence or actual being, is actually applied unto it. The just measure and quality of that success, which is, by the idea of equity, bounty, or mercy, allotted to every event, is no less essentially contained in goodness itself, than the event itself, or its being, is in infinite essence, or in essence itself.

3. The immediate and proper subject of fate is freedom of choice, or contingency in human actions; the *genus proximum* is the certainty of divine retribution according to the nature and quality of the 187
choice we make. Yet are not rewards or retributions, but retributions extraordinary and remarkable, as well for their manner of execution as for their matter or

[k] In the Treatise of the Divine Essence, part i.

quality, properly termed fatal. Of sinister fates, there is no contingent subject which can exhibit a more exact picture or model, for the manner how they come to pass, than a game at chess or tables. Many games at both, which at the beginning, or until the middle of time spent in them, are very fair, and more than ten to one, after some few oversights, or ill dice, become desperate, and irrecoverable by any skill that can be used: so events properly fatal become at length unpreventable, irresistible; but such they were not from the beginning of time, or from their infancy or first attempts on whom they fall. Such disastrous or dismal events for which the heathens usually indicted fates, were commonly remarkable checks given, they know not by whom, to human policies or cunning contrivances; they were as the unexpected winning of an aftergame upon some great stake or wager. Good or dexterous fates were the unexpected issues of men's contrivances for their own or associates' good fortunes. The manner of accomplishing such fates or fortunes is like a game won by a bungler against a skilful player, by extraordinary dice, or by the suggestion of some by-stander more skilful than both. This kind of fate or strange fortune, of which most of the heathen knew not well what to make, we may define to be the incomprehensible disposition, or irresistible combination of second causes, conspiring for the infallible execution of God's will, maugre all plots or conspiracies of men to defeat the events which he had purposed. Sinister or disastrous fates were the infallible execution of his consequent will; good fates or fortune were the infallible effects of his antecedent will: both were sometimes strangely and remarkably accomplished against cunning and potent oppositions, not so much for the party's sake whom they befell,

as for others. Many disasters have befallen some men, though deservedly for their own sins, yet withal for the admonishing of others, to prevent the like. Hence it is that the heathen poet's observation, *Multi committunt eadem diverso crimina fato*, though in many cases most true, is no way prejudicial to the unchangeable rules of the all-seeing Providence, which is always full of equity, whose justice is still allayed with mercy.

CHAP. XXII.

The opposite Opinions of the Stoicks and Epicures. In what Sense it is true, that all Things are necessary in respect of God's Decree.

1. THE Stoicks did well in contradicting the Epicures, which held fortune and chance to rule all things, or at least to be in themselves somethings, not mere denominations of such events as had no certain or constant cause apprehensible by man. The original of their error was their desire to be extremely contrary to the Epicureans in a matter contingent, or rather in contingency itself; for that is the common subject of fortune, chance, or fate. Fortune and chance they deny to be any thing, with no other purpose, it seems, than that they make fate to be all things. They 188
were orthodoxal in acknowledging an infallible unerring Providence, but they erred again as much in not acknowledging this infallible Providence ofttimes to hold the mean between chance or fortune and absolute necessity, or not to order and moderate contingency itself. From the same original, some have thought it to be the most safe and compendious course for rooting out error and superstition, to overthrow the antecedent, when their commission directs them

only to deny or refute the consequence. As not a few, no less afraid (and the fear itself is just) to grant merit of works, than the Stoicks were to admit of chance, have taken away all contingency in human actions, save only with reference to second causes, wherein they seem to invert that rule of tyrannical policy, "He is a fool that kills the father, and leaves his brats behind to revenge his blood:" these take away the harmless parents for the faulty issue's sake, seeking to destroy true and orthodoxal antecedents, for the incommodious consequences which others have falsely fathered upon them. The reclaiming of men from this one error is my present aim and scope.

2. For the better effecting whereof, we will subscribe at length unto their general maxim, 'that all things are necessary in respect of God's decree,' upon condition they will not extend it beyond its natural and proper subject, or not take *decree* in the Stoical, but in a civil sense. Now he that saith, 'All things are necessary in respect of God's decree,' cannot in civil construction be conceived to mean any more than thus; 'All things which God hath decreed are necessary.' The question then is, whether every thing that is may truly be said to be the object, or part of the object, of God's decree? to which question our answer must be negative. For those things only are properly said to be decreed which are enacted and appointed for better ordering and moderating such things as either by nature, custom, or ill example, are apt to grow worse, or may be amended by good education, wholesome advice, or discipline. Every decree of man supposeth the subject or party whom it immediately concerns to be capable of persuasion to good or evil, to be alterable in his inclinations through fear of punishment or hope of reward. Magistrates or corporations take

order that madmen or dogs should do no harm; yet are not these creatures the proper subject of their decrees or sanctions. They do not tie mastives by penal laws not to bite; they do not bind madmen to good behaviour; but they enjoin men of reason and understanding to muzzle mastives, lest they bite; to keep madmen or frantics close, lest they should do mischief by going abroad. Now the Divine decree concerning the ordering of man is the rule or pattern of all human decrees, and therefore supposeth somewhat in man which makes him more capable of the Divine sanction than reasonless or inanimate creatures are. This capacity of the reasonable creature, or man, consists in freedom of choice, or contingency in his actions or resolutions: the donation of this freedom upon man is an act of God's free bounty, and is presupposed as the proper subject to the Divine decree, or to all acts or awards of Divine justice or mercy. The proper and formal object of the same decree is the moderation of this contingency, or freedom of man, by awarding the issues or consequences, in mercy, justice, or bounty, exactly proportioned to the nature and manner of his choice and resolution. For illustrating the truth of our intended conclusion, let us take the Epigrammatist's relation[1], or that idea of chance or 189
fortune which he hath pictured for a true story. It was not necessary, in respect of the Divine decree, that the one should be so extreme poor, or the other so miserably rich, as to come within the compass of that snare wherein the latter was taken: the means by which the one came to that depth of poverty or melancholy passions wherewith he had almost been stifled, and the other to that height of covetousness

[1] See chap. 20. §. 6.

from which he fell headlong into despair, were contingent: neither were driven into such excess of passion or distemper by irresistible necessity: but taking them as now they have made themselves, that the one should be led unto temptation, the other into it, fell not out by chance, but by the especial disposition of the Divine providence. The great tempter intended mischief to the one, but failed, God having yet a blessing in store for him; to the other, perhaps, he intended not this particular harm until opportunity did offer it: so that the enriching of the one by a chance rare and unusual, in respect of man, was necessary in respect of God's decree of mercy and fatherly providence; the delivering of the other unto Satan was likewise necessary in respect of God's justice.

3. Now if such events as to the apprehension of mere natural men come by chance, be necessary in respect of the Divine decree, disasters, by common consent reputed fatal, must by efficacy of the same decree be divorced from contingency, with which formerly they had connexion. For though fortune, as well as fate, be a branch or particle of the proper object of the Divine decree, yet, as they have reference to man, this difference may in the last place be observed betwixt them: those things fall out by mere chance or fortune whose procuration or prevention hath not been thought of at all by man, or but slightly before they happen; those by fate, which have been often and seriously thought of, but either far exceed all expectation, or frustrate solicitous care or forecast. Ofttimes the unexpected accomplishment of one man's expectation defeats the industrious hopes or anxious contrivance of another, and such events are in a twofold sense termed fatal:

Heu stirpem invisam, ac fatis contraria nostris
Fata Phrygum.

Both Phrygian race and Phrygian fate,
As contrary to ours, we hate.

4. All events properly fatal include a kind of canvass between man and man, nation and nation; or between Divine providence and human policy; or betwixt the soul of man and wicked spirits licensed by Divine providence to solicit, tempt, or assault her.

CHAP. XXIII. 190

Of the Degrees of Necessity, and of the Original of inevitable or absolute Necessity.

1. WERE the main question hitherto disputed thus proposed, 'Whether all things were only so far necessary, so far contingent, as it pleased the Omnipotent to appoint; or whether the success or issue of human intentions or contrivances were so far avoidable or unavoidable as he hath made them by his decree;' I should have infidels only for mine adversaries: Christians, I am persuaded, will move no questions about his power or ability, but only about his will or pleasure, for determining all things. And who can deny that God's law or covenant for effecting some things is more strict and peremptory than for effecting others. The prophet supposed his covenant for day and night to be more certain and invariable, than his covenant for the former and latter rain: and yet the law which he hath appointed for the most glorious creatures in the firmament is not like the law of the Medes and Persians: it was dispensed withal at Joshua's suit, and may again be dispensed with at his pleasure: the motion of the sun and moon is not perpetually necessary in respect of his decree. The seasons of seedtime, harvest, and the disposition of

these lower regions, (in which Fortune may seem to have placed her wheel, and Chance erected his tottering throne,) may become certain and constant to such as constantly observe his holy covenants: *If you walk in my statutes, then will I give you rain in due season,* Levit. xxvi. 3, 4, &c. Such was the wisdom of the laws given unto this people, that by observing them they might have changed the disposition of the air, altered the influence of the heavens, and have had dominion over the stars.

2. Constancy of assent or adherence unto these fundamental truths of religion would fasten our minds unto a point of inestimable use, (as well for reforming or curing maladies of state, as of private life,) often in this treatise intimated, but not fully declared. The point is this: main events, which at this instant are merely contingent, and may easily be prevented by diversity of practices, not only possible, but acceptable by the Divine appointment, may, in succession or revolution of time, become more necessary, and at length truly fatal, altogether unavoidable. Absolutely necessary from all eternities nothing can truly be reputed besides the Deity and the internal operations of the ever blessed Trinity. Many things which from the beginning of time had but the first degrees of possibility, (their contraries or incompatible opposites being in the highest degree of probability,) have, by the continued sinister sway of man's thoughts and practices, been drawn from mere possibilities to be more than probable, and unto the first degree of necessity; yet at the first not absolutely or irresistibly necessary: some means there may be, though but a few left of many, and those not easy to be put in practice, for preventing them. The events of greater consequences which stood thus, were with the heathens accounted

fata minora: for fates (as we said before) admit the selfsame division or degrees that necessity doth. The same events, by omission of practices appointed by the Divine decree for their prevention, become altogether 191
irresistible, and absolutely necessary in respect of any means possible for averting them: yet not absolutely necessary from eternity, but absolutely necessary only from that point of time wherein the eternal decree or providence did cut off all contrary possibilities, which before were concurrent with the possibility of their being. And events thus utterly bestript of all contingency, or all possibility of being recalled or avoided, were by the heathens ascribed *fato majori*, to greater fates. The symptoms or characters of events becoming thus irresistibly and absolutely necessary, come elsewhere[m] (by God's assistance) to be deciphered. Here it sufficeth to advertise the reader, that as divers things besides, so necessity may be enstyled *absolute* many ways, but two especially. Some things are said to be absolutely necessary, that is, altogether inevitable, albeit this necessity or inevitableness did accrue from some occasions or set points of time lately past. As many diseases, in their nature curable, and easy to have been cured by ordinary medicines, (if they had been administered in time,) do, by some few days' ill diet, by careless attendance, or casual relapse, become altogether incurable by any after-care or help of physic. Other events there be, which were absolutely necessary in respect of all times; their exhibition or production could not by any policy of man have been prevented. So our Saviour's death was absolutely necessary from the beginning of the world, but whether absolutely necessary from eternity, or absolutely necessary without supposal of Adam's fall, (which was not

[m] In the Treatise of Prodigies, and of their useful observation.

necessary,) shall not here be disputed. Certain it is, that nothing decreed by God can be so absolutely necessary as the Divine nature or blessed Trinity is. Many errors have found opportunity to mingle themselves with Divine truth, for want of a commodious distinction or explication of this indistinct and confused term *absolute:* the anatomy of it were worth the pains of the learned. Evident it is, that some things which are not to-day, may to-morrow be, in their kind, absolute.

3. We truly say, that the sum of money wherein one man stands bound unto another is absolutely due from the time of the forfeiture or nonperformance of the condition: that is, there is no plea left in law, no course or means of justice, to avoid the payment of it. Yet was not the same sum absolutely due from the first date of the bond; the performance of the condition in due time had prevented the loss, which negligence or breach of promise hath now made necessary and irrecoverable. Monies lent upon no other consideration but upon mere good-will, to be repaid whensoever the party lending shall demand them, are absolutely due from the date of the recognisance; and for that which is absolutely due there is a necessity of payment or satisfaction.

4. Some disastrous events become, by Divine providence, irresistibly necessary long before they be actually accomplished or inflicted: such was the destruction of Pharaoh, of Sennacherib, the desolation of Judah and Jerusalem by Titus. Others become fatally irresistible within some few days or hours before they happen; others, not till the very moment wherein they are awarded, either for some grievous sin then committed, or for some remarkable document of God's justice. Some again are for a long time totally irresistible and

unpreventable, others resistible, *quoad tantum*[n], though not *quoad totum*, that is, part of the evils might be prevented though not the whole. All that we have 192
said concerning the alteration of possibilities or contingencies, or change of events contingent into necessary, may easily be conceived without any surmise of alteration in the Omnipotent, or in his everlasting decree. The least degree of possibility or contingency is as necessarily derived from [o] his absolute irresistible will, as necessity itself in the highest degree. It is impossible for possibility to have any right to actual being without his special appointment. To think that fate, chance, or fortune, should nestle in some certain periods of time, or be brought forth by revolutions of the heavens, is altogether heathenish. But neither doth scripture insinuate nor can reason justly suspect any danger in avouching, that the Almighty suffers, that contingency or multiplicity of possibilities between good and evil, or the several degrees of evil, wherewith he hath endued the reasonable creature, to explicate or contract itself in every moment of time. And according to the nature of the free motions of man, the irresistible decree brings forth such events or issues as were truly possible from eternity, but become necessary by revolutions, not of the heavens, but of

[n] See chap. 24. parag. 9, 10.

[o] Nos calamitatum nostrarum authores sumus. Deus enim pius est et misericors, et qui, ut scriptum est, neminem velit perire vel lædere. Nos ergo adversum nos omnia facimus. Nihil itaque, nihil est in nobis crudelius nobis. Nos, inquam, nos etiam Deo nolente cruciamus. Sed videlicet adversum meipsum dicere videor, qui cum superius dixerim, ob peccata nostra nos puniri a Deo, nunc dicam nos puniri a nobis ipsis. Utrumque verum est; a Deo quippe punimur, sed ipsi facimus ut puniamur. Cum autem punire nos ipsi facimus, cui dubium est quin ipsi nos nostris criminibus puniamus: quia quicunque dat causam qua puniatur, ipse se punit, secundum illud; *Funibus peccatorum suorum unusquisque constringitur.*— Salvianus, lib. 8. pag. 186.

man's heart and thoughts; public plague or calamities become necessary or inevitable by these means only. We must ever remember that God hath not so decreed all things before they come, or the manner how they shall come, as that he doth not yet decree them. For he continually decrees as well necessity as contingency, and brings forth effects as well contingent as necessary from this present hour, both being sometimes merely possible. The truth of this our last assertion may be demonstrated from our former principle: If one part of a disjunctive proposition be denied, or fail, the other may be necessarily inferred, though neither be absolutely and determinately necessary, but become such by consequence, or upon supposition of the other's failing. Many things which, in respect of our present purpose or resolution, are free or contingent, may within a short while after become altogether necessary and unavoidable, without any alteration or change in us. Suppose a judge should be tied by oath to execute justice upon a malefactor within eight days, there is no necessity that he should perform his vow the first, second, third, or fourth day. The execution or not execution of justice is, during the first seven days, free and contingent, without any breach or violation of oath: but omitting the opportunities which the first seven days have offered, the execution of justice upon the eighth day is as necessary as his honesty or fidelity; as necessary as if he had been tied by oath to execute it upon that day alone. The parts of indefinite time, or of the matter promised or threatened by man, may be far more than this instance implies. So that the performance of those duties or promises, which for a long time was free and arbitrary, and might have been performed in different measure, becomes at length absolutely necessary, and necessary to such a determi-

nate degree. The parts of God's disjunctive decree, and the degrees, as well of every matter decreed by him, as of the time allotted for the execution of it, may be numberless in respect of us. And man, by not entertaining the opportunities which by several times have been allotted him for reducing his possibilities of doing God's antecedent will into act, may forfeit the very 193
possibilities themselves for ever, or for a long time. And by continuance of such neglect of many parts or kinds of success, all truly possible in respect of the eternal decree, that only shall in the end become necessary which he least desires, which his soul shall most detest. In respect of some future events, not as yet become necessary, the eternal decree leaves fewer branches of contrary contingencies or possibilities, in respect of others more. Their multitude may expire or revive every moment, according to the diversity of men's ways, on which God's will is always done by means infinite, at least to man incomprehensible.

4. The incarnation of our blessed Saviour was, in the opinion of some of the ancients, absolutely necessary before the creation of mankind, and should in time infallibly have been accomplished, for confirming or augmenting that happy estate wherein Adam was created; if so he had continued steadfast in it until the time appointed by God for his change or translation. But however the schools may determine or waive this question, (I must confess neither very useful nor in this place much necessary,) there was no necessity, questionless, that the second Adam should become a bloody sacrifice for our sins, unless the first Adam had sinned; but after he, by his actual transgression, had utterly cut off that possibility of perseverance which the eternal decree had bestowed upon him, the humiliation and bitter passion of the Son of

God became as necessary, in respect of God's mercy and bounty towards man, and of his infinite justice, which (notwithstanding his infinite mercy) was to be fully satisfied, as his incarnation. After Cain had despised God's counsel, and had slain his brother Abel, it was necessary the Messias should proceed from Seth; yet not then so necessary that he should be the son of Abraham as the son of Seth. Others, lineally descended from Seth, might have forfeited their real possibilities or ordinary hopes of attaining unto this glory. At the least, when God first made his promise to the woman and her seed, the birth of Abraham was not in respect of the eternal decree so necessary as Christ's birth was. It was possible to have written Terah as childless as Jeconiah, after his marriage with Abraham's mother. But after the same God had passed that promise unto Abraham, and confirmed it by solemn oath—*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, it was thenceforth altogether as necessary that our Redeemer should be the seed of Abraham as of the woman; yet not then so necessary that he should be the son of Judah, or that Judah should have a son called Jesse, or that Jesse should have a son called David, a man after God's own heart. That glory which, long after God's oath to Abraham, befell the tribe of Judah, was (for aught we know or can object unto the contrary) a part of that dignity whose possibility was once really possessed by Reuben, though utterly forfeited by his misdemeanour. But after Jacob had prophesied that the *sceptre should not depart from Judah till Shiloh come*, or rather after the Lord had sworn not to fail David in bestowing the prerogative promised to Judah upon his seed, the necessity becomes as great that our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec should

be the son of David, as the son of man or seed of Abraham. Now if we can persuade ourselves that God either speaks or swears as he truly intends, or that mortal man may certainly know where to have him or what to trust to, we must believe and acknowledge those events, concerning which he hath sworn 194
not to repent, to be far more necessary, in respect of the irresistible decree from the first interposition of such oath, than those ordinary blessings or cursings which he seriously threateneth or promiseth, but disjunctively, and with express reservation of their repentance whom he threateneth, or of their defection whom he encourageth by his promises: yet such was his covenant of life and death with his people, such was his decree concerning the prosperity or calamity of David's temporal kingdom; as the [p]prophet's comments upon the promise made to [q]David expressly testify. By these and the like oracles fully exemplified in the alternation of Jerusalem and Judah's contrary fates or success, we may discern the course of that eternal providence, by whose irresistible unerring disposition all other states or kingdoms have the certain periods of their prosperity or calamity assigned, and by which princes and greatest statesmen stand or fall.

p Jer. xviii. 1, &c.
q 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c. See the next chapter of this book, paragraph 2.

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SECTION III.

Of the Manifestation of Divine Providence in the remarkable Erection, Declination, and Periods of Kingdoms; in overruling Policy, and disposing the Success of human Undertakings.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of the contrary Fates or Awards whereof David's temporal Kingdom was capable; and of its Devolution from God's antecedent to his consequent Will.

1. HOMER was not so blinded with the heathenish misconceit of fate, as not to see more ways to death than one. In Achilles he described two courses of life; the one shorter, but decked with glory, the other longer, but bare and naked of fame; both alike possible by fates.

> Thetis foresaw, fates by two ways
> Might bring me to my end;
> The one by Troy, where if my time
> I should with honour spend,
> It was but short; but if at home
> A sluggard still I stay'd,
> My life was long, but with no fame
> Or praise to be repaid [r].

Now as one poison sometimes expels another, so this opinion of double fate (if men be disposed to use this term) takes away the malignity of that error which holds all events to be fatal; albeit of such twofold fates or success, the one part or the other must by absolute necessity be fulfilled according to the

[r] Homer, Iliad, 1.

party's choice unto whom they are awarded. The body of that which Homer shadowed in Achilles is evidently contained in God's forementioned covenant with Israel, and sealed unto us by manifest experience in David's line. For of God's special providence over the seed of Abraham, or of the Jewish nation in general, we have treated at large in the first book of the Comments upon the Apostles' Creed. The contrary fates of David's kingdom in succeeding ages seem to wrestle and strive as Jacob and Esau did in the womb, or to countersway each other like two opposite scales unequally balanced by turns. That thus it fared with David's kingdom doth not argue God's decree concerning it to have been mutable, but 196
rather immutably to have elevated and depressed both prince and people, according to the degrees of their mutability in turning to him or from him.

2. Solomon had the largest talent of wealth, and the greatest measure of wit to use it, that any earthly king either before or after him had. His possibilities to increase his kingdom, and propagate greatness to his posterity, were much greater than any earthly monarch since him might expect. Many parts of God's glorious promises made to David were literally meant of him, which were never literally fulfilled in him or in his natural lineage, because they did not perform the conditions which God required, that they might be more capable of his extraordinary undeserved favours. The covenant with David is expressed, Psalm lxxxix. 20–23, *I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague*

them that hate him. This promise pertains to David and his successors: but however the promise was on God's part unalterable, yet the prerogative promised was subject unto change or contingency: for so a little after the psalmist distinguisheth betwixt David's seed and David's sons—*His seed will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven,* verse 29. This he speaks not of many, but of one, to wit, of Christ; to whom only the kingdom of David was predestinated. Of such as were ordained to this kingdom he speaks in the plural, not absolutely, but conditionally: *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes,* verses 30–32. The tenor then of God's covenant with David, as it concerned Christ, was absolute; but as it concerns David's other sons, it was disjunctive or conditional. If any shall question why God for many generations did deal no better with David's successors than with the successors of other kings, the answer from the tenor of the covenant is plain:—they forsook his laws, and would not walk in his judgments, Psalm lxxxix. 30. And thus breaking his statutes, their visitation was altogether unevitable, not on a sudden, but by degrees. The Lord's arm, even in Solomon's time, was stretched out ready to fetch the blow, which, after his death, fell upon his son Rehoboam, as heir to his chastisements. The blow was sudden and smart; for of twelve tribes ten were rent from his kingdom by Jeroboam. The wounds inflicted by the Egyptian upon Judah and Benjamin, and upon Jerusalem herself, were grievous, though as yet not uncurable: so grievous as might give that people plainly to under-

stand, that the prosperity of David's earthly kingdom was not like the days of heaven, nor the glory of Solomon's throne like the sun in the firmament, altogether privileged from change or mutability. But albeit the motion of the creature appointed to execute God's wrath were sudden, yet the weight of Jerusalem's burden was not permanent, because she was not as yet frozen in sin.

3. Of Rehoboam's successors some were good, and these, by their penitency and heroical reformation, set back the dial of such dismal fates as still did threaten them: many were bad, and did draw God's plagues upon themselves and their people. And whilst the blow of God's stretched out arm is diverted and borne off by the fervent prayers of godly princes, the weight 197
of the whole nation's burden is much increased by the iniquity of the people. Either the number of the supplicants was not equal to the number of the delinquents, or the fervency of their prayer and repentance not so constant as the other's delight in sin and wickedness. The weight of their sinister fates by this means secretly and insensibly increasing, (even whilst their motion was restrained or abated,) increased the swiftness or violence of the motion, when, by permission of the Divine decree, they had liberty to take their wonted course. Joas and Achas pulled them on so fast, that Micah threatened judgment, not against the king and nobles only, but against city and temple, in such a thundering voice, as if desolation had even then besieged the city round about, and utter destruction was ready to enter in at the breach: *Therefore shall Sion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest,* Micah iii. 12. Spake he thus of his own times, or of some

others following? was it, in respect of the eternal decree, altogether impossible for this dreadful sentence to have been forthwith put in execution? Indeed, many of their magistrates and politicians, most of their priests and prophets, until this very instant, had said to the like purpose: *Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us*, verse 11. This vain confidence, presumptuously and falsely grounded upon the immutability of God's promises, made the doom menaced by Micah more necessary and fatal at this time than otherwise it would have been; though to such as understood the tenor of God's covenant with his people, neither at this time nor many years after altogether unevitable.

4. The good king Hezekiah knew the Lord did not threaten in jest, and for this reason his fear was hearty and his prayers earnest: *Did he not fear the Lord, and besought the face of the Lord?* Jer. xxvi. 19. But did this his fear or hearty prayers impair the present possibility or necessity of the plagues threatened? Yes, *The Lord repented him.* Of what? that he had denounced all this evil against Jerusalem, or entreated Hezekiah so roughly by his prophet Micah? No: *But the Lord repented him of the evil which he had denounced against him and meant to execute.* For who *repents* himself of that which he did not so much as truly intend? Is God then as man that he should repent? It is impossible that there should be any change of purpose in God, and herein he is most unlike to man, or the son of man, whose repentance always includes some internal alteration of will or purpose, not of the matter purposed only. Our best intentions of good to others often expire upon particular respects and cannot be revived again, albeit we neither had just occasion to take dislike, nor the same

reasons to continue it which we had to take it. Through the inconstancy of our nature we loathe to-morrow what we like to-day: our affections alter without any change in the matter affected by us. Far otherwise it is with God, whose will or purpose is still immutable, and yet exactly fitteth every change or mutation in the creature. To have punished Jerusalem, continuing her wonted course (but six months longer after the prophet had thus warned her,) with such miseries as Sennacherib had menaced, was one part of the eternal and unchangeable decree; another part of the same decree (no less immutable) was to avert these plagues from Jerusalem, truly repenting upon their denunciation. No former wickedness could alienate his love from her, or make him recall the blessings promised to David, so long as this people was so affected as in that covenant was required.

5. The possibility of the desolation menaced by 198
Micah was, for the present, as great as the Assyrian was potent. It might truly have been said of this city, in respect of his army, what one saith of navigators:

Est tua tam prope mors, quam prope cernis aquam.

That extraordinary power wherewith the Lord had armed this tyrant to take vengeance upon his neighbour nations, might well make the present avoidance of the plagues menaced by Micah seem almost impossible. But good Hezekiah, by turning with all his heart and all his soul unto the Lord, unto whom all things are possible, did not only remove destruction threatened from the city and temple, but caused it to turn upon the destroyer. Jerusalem and Judah, by the unfeigned penitence of prince and people, became the object of God's antecedent will, and fell under the former part of God's covenant with David: *The enemy*

shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him, Psalm lxxxix. 22, 23. The Assyrian, by going beyond his commission, in daring not Hezekiah only but the Lord of hosts, unto whose protection Hezekiah had fled, becomes the object of God's consequent will, which, by Divine appointment, he was at that time to execute upon Jerusalem; but upon Jerusalem fallen away by disobedience, not upon Jerusalem returning in heart unto her God.

6. That this people might have some time of breathing and respite to gather themselves for the better accomplishing of so great a work as Hezekiah had begun, the Lord in his wisdom so disposed that Tirhakah, king of Cush, should make forward to entertain Sennacherib with battle at that very instant wherein he had purposed to give the onset upon Jerusalem. This unexpected removal of present terror was, no doubt, a sure pledge unto the people for strengthening their reliance on God's promise, for settling their hearts, and continuing their constancy in fervent prayers during the time of the enemy's absence. And seeing the force of Egypt and Cush were not sufficient to dissipate Sennacherib's mighty army, perhaps not able to hold him play any longer, the Lord sent Hezekiah and his people deliverance from heaven: *Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses*, Isaiah xxxvii. 36. The noise of this great overthrow was as the joyful sound of a jubilee unto Jerusalem, and did portend another more admirable and victorious jubilee to be accomplished in the same place; of which else-

where [s]. This for the present might witness to Hezekiah and the people, that rather than one tittle of God's covenant with David should fall to the ground, the host of heaven should leave their station and keep garrison on earth. A little after this miraculous deliverance, the sun is compelled to go fifteen degrees backwards, for setting forward the course of Hezekiah's life, whom death and fate had now, in the world's sight, arrested. God hereby testified unto prince and people, that if they would continue such in health as they were in sickness, so well-minded in peace and prosperity as they had been in strait siege, or other distress of war, Jerusalem's good days might become as certain and constant as the days of heaven; seeing that great light, which was appointed from the beginning to rule the day, did now give place to 199
Hezekiah's prayers. But most of this people were most unlike their prince, albeit even he, after he had received those two miraculous pledges of God's love, *did not render according to the reward bestowed upon him,* 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. *For his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah,* ver. 26.

7. After the yoke of Ashur was taken from off this people's neck, many of them became wanton, others secure, as not suspecting that *a cockatrice should spring out of this serpent's root,* that *his fruit should be a fiery flying serpent,* Isaiah xiv. 29. Unto Hezekiah himself, though a most wise and prudent king, the Baby-

[s] In the Treatise of Christ's answer to John.

lonian tyranny, being now in his infancy, did seem by nature more mild and gentle than the Assyrian had been. And, not content to entertain the king of Babylon's ambassadors with courtesies suitable to their congratulations, he shewed them his treasury and all the good things wherewith the Lord had blessed him; willing, perhaps, to give their master and the world to wit, that notwithstanding the former wars and exactions, he was no beggar, but a fit confederate for neighbour princes to curb the insolency of the Assyrian, whose strength, though much abated by the terrible blow which the angel of the Lord had given Sennacherib's host, was not quite broken till many years after. But the prophet knew this fawning whelp to be of wolfish kind, and discovered those implanted seeds of cruelty in him, which, when they came to be ripe, would be more noisome to the kings and princes of Judah than his predecessor the Assyrian had been. *Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon*, 2 Kings xx. 16—18.

8. Any heathen which had held Esaias for an undoubted soothsayer would instantly have concluded hence, that the captivity of Hezekiah's successors, and all the miseries which the Babylonian afterwards brought upon Judah and Jerusalem, were absolutely fatal, altogether impossible to be avoided. And many good Christians, perhaps, will question, whether the plagues here threatened were not from this point of time necessary in respect of the Divine decree. To

answer this question by interrogation: Why should not the spirit of the prophet Esay be as truly subject to the former prophetical rule as Micah's was? Now God, according to that rule, was ready to repent him of all the evil which he had threatened, whensoever the people should repent them of whatsoever they had done. The Lord had given Hezekiah and his successors a far larger and longer time for preventing the evil which Esay threatened, than they had for avoiding the doom denounced by Micah. The very tenor of denunciation made by Esay shews them a ready means for preventing the woe denounced, so they would have laid it to their hearts, or followed the advice of succeeding prophets. But mortality must needs be rife, where variety of diseases and multitudes of unskilful empirics do meet. The common transgressions of the people are the epidemical diseases of states: and such projects as princes or statesmen, without the prescript 200
of God's word, or suggestion of his providence, use for their recovery, are like unseasonable ministration of empirical or old wives' medicines to crazed bodies. They usually invite or entertain the destruction or ruin of kingdoms otherwise ready to depart. Not the best amongst the kings of Judah but were smatterers in empirical or secular policy. Some were more, some less, all too much given to put confidence in multitude of men and store of treasure. And for increasing this supposed sinew of war and nutriment of peace, they used means neither warrantable by God's written law nor by the rule of charity. To prevent this mischief, which is the root of all evil, what persuasion could be more fit or pertinent than this prediction of the prophet; *That the wealth which Hezekiah and his fathers had heaped together,* which his successors would be too careful to increase, would in succeeding

ages steal their children, for whom it was provided, for them, and make them miserable captives in a foreign land. To heap up riches we know not for whom, is a vanity; to heap them up with care and toil, to the destruction of our best private friends and advancement of the public enemy, is the extremity of folly mixed with misery. Had Hezekiah his successors been as ready to ask counsel of God's prophets as of politicians, these could have instructed them, that the miseries foretold by Esay were fatal unto covetousness and unconscionable care for posterity; yet not simply necessary after covetousness was much increased in Hezekiah's successors. For, long after the going out of this decree, whensoever the princes of Judah repented for their own oppression and the oppression of their fathers, the Lord *repented him of the plagues denounced*, and shewed himself ready to remove the oppressor from them. And though impenitency in other sins did in part concur, yet continuance in violence and oppression was the principal string and fatal cord, by which the princes of Judah did draw captivity upon themselves and their children, and desolation upon the city.

9. To pass over the various alternation of Judah's and Jerusalem's different fates in the days of Manasses, Ammon, and Josias, and come to Jehoiakim, Josias' son, in whose days the inveterate disease of Judah came to a crisis: *Did not thy father* (saith the prophet Jeremy to this untoward prince) *eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.*

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim[t] *the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.* Jeremiah xxii. 15—19.

Shortly after the execution of this sentence upon Jehoiakim in full measure, Jeconiah his son, with other of the royal seed, according to Esaias's former prophecy, were carried captives unto Babel, and all or some of them made eunuchs. Howbeit the execution of the same decree upon Zedekiah, and such as were yet left behind, was not as yet unavoidable, or merely fatal; but such, notwithstanding, they made it at last, by continuance of like covetousness and oppression.

When the city was more narrowly besieged by the Chaldean than it had been by the Assyrian, the Lord 201
of hosts calls for the Egyptian, as he had done for the king of Cush, to remove the siege. The liberty and respiration which Zedekiah and his besieged people in the mean time got, being much greater than Hezekiah had for two years' space together, was a true pledge of God's antecedent will, which in part they had fulfilled, and which should undoubtedly have been fulfilled in greater measure for their good, so they had used this liberty to God's glory, or gone on so well in this time of breathing as in their distress they had begun. *Ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: but ye returned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at*

[t] See Josephus in the History of Jehoiakim. Et Seder Olam.

liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, &c. Jer. xxxiv. 15—17. *And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the Lord, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant,* v. 21, 22.

10. Too much skill in secular policy made them put too great confidence in the strength of Egypt; and this confidence in the help of man made them secure, whilst they were conscious of breaking the covenant which their fathers had made and they lately renewed with their God: the probabilities of the Egyptian's success against the Chaldean were (in all politic esteem) very great; and likely it is that the Chaldeans were brought back again with speed unto Jerusalem by the special hand of the Almighty, that they might execute his judgments upon this rebellious people. How necessary, how fatal and unevitable the execution of his consequent will always becomes, where his antecedent will hath been thus openly and wilfully neglected, may best be gathered from the same prophet's reiterated threats unto this people, resuming (as it seems) their former vain confidence of the Chaldeans'

final departure, after his forementioned prophecy to the contrary, Jer. xxxvii. 9, 10: *Thus saith the Lord; Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.* To extinguish this flame, or prevent the extinction of Zedekiah's royal race and Judah's earthly glory, there was no possibility left so long as they wrestled with fates, and made policy their strength: yet was there after this time a possibility, as true as God's promise can make any, for escaping *a tanto*, though not *a toto;* a possibility for Zedekiah to have kept himself and his family in a better estate than they afterwards enjoyed; a possibility to have left the city and temple standing, after death had disposed of them; so he would at the time appointed by God have submitted himself unto the king of Babel, unto whom he had sworn allegiance. 202 *Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burnt with fire; and thou shalt live, and thy house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hands of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand,* Jerem. xxxviii. 17, 18.

And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak

unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that the Lord hath shewed me: and, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back. So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and thou shalt cause this city to be burnt with fire, &c. Jer. xxxviii. 19—23.

11. This last neglect of God's antecedent will, so often revealed for his good, procured the speedy execution of his consequent will without all possibility to avoid it: not a tittle of Jeremy's and Ezekiel's prophecy, which his politicians sought to set at variance[u], but is exactly fulfilled upon him; and so is Micah's prophecy upon this city. The manner how Jeremy's and Ezekiel's prophecy, which seem to contradict each other, were both fulfilled, is admirable, and might well move a man not well acquainted with the nature of prophecies and God's special providence to think the fates had plotted his ruin. But this particular argument is prosecuted elsewhere more at large.

12. To recapitulate the sum of many arguments to like purposes: unto every possible choice or resolution made by man, whether concerning matters private or public, there is a distinct correspondent success allotted by the omnipotent and immutable decree. Every actual choice or resolution is as the drawing of a new lot, whose just price or recompense, be it good or bad,

[u] See Josephus in the History of Zedekiah.

is instamped upon it from eternity; and for the awarding or payment of it in due time, the whole host of God's creatures stand bound by the very tenor of their being or dependency upon their Maker. Seeing all of them were made by his word, and are continued by his mere will and pleasure, sooner shall they forfeit their very being, and be resolved into nothing, than the least tittle of God's will concerning any creature should not be fulfilled; or that success, be it good or bad, should not be awarded to private men or public states in that exact degree and measure which God from eternity hath appointed.

From ignorance of this essential subordination which fate, or conspiracy of second causes, has unto God's irresistible providence, who by his infinite creative power can at all times dissolve their combination, or compose them anew, by ways to man for number incomprehensible, as pleaseth him, the wisest amongst state wizards have erred; and do err more grossly in assigning the causes of kingdoms' ruins or 203
erections, or in prognosticating the success of politic skill, than a vulgar astronomer should do, which would take upon him to foretell the peculiar disposition of the air or weather in every place throughout this island for every hour of the year following. The observation which many of them gather from the inspection of times present or past, is of as little use for future ages, as an almanack of this year is for the years following. Sooner may modern scholars prove extraordinary husbandmen by observing Virgil's calendar of the rising and setting of the stars, or other rules of that ancient husbandry which he describes, than pragmatical wits become wise statesmen by reading Tacitus, Livy, or others, better acquainted with the mysteries of state, or princely secrets, than with God's

providence, or with the Almighty's decree concerning the success of their projects. Though that decree be, as he is, most immutable, yet the variety of men's dispositions, especially in sundry ages, is greater than any alterations in the heavens; the divers conjunctions or oppositions of men's wills to his are more than can be found amongst the stars. Now it is his immutable will to render unto every people and nation according to the degrees of that conformity or dissonancy which they hold with his mercy, bounty, or justice, or with his most holy will.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the sudden and strange Erection of the Macedonian Empire, and the Manifestation of God's special Providence in Alexander's Expedition and Success.

1. ARISTOTLE[x] being born when Greece did flourish, and living when the halcyon days of Macedon began to dawn, would gladly tie the light of God's countenance, which in his full age was inclining to the meridian of Greece, unto the situation of his country, and disposition of his countrymen, whose politic virtues, in his philosophical vanity, were entailed to the peculiar temper of that clime. "The people," saith he, "that live in cold countries, and in Europe (as distinct from Greece), are stout and hardy, but not so wise and politic; more free than civil, much apter to be

[x] Τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ψυχροῖς τόποις ἔθνη καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην θυμοῦ μέν ἐστι πλήρη, διανοίας δὲ ἐνδεέστερα καὶ τέχνης· διόπερ ἐλεύθερα μὲν διατελεῖ μᾶλλον, ἀπολίτευτα δὲ καὶ τῶν πλησίον ἄρχειν οὐ δυνάμενα. Τὰ δὲ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν διανοητικὰ μὲν καὶ τεχνικὰ τὴν ψυχὴν, ἄθυμα δέ· διόπερ ἀρχόμενα καὶ δουλεύοντα διατελεῖ. Τὸ δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος ὥσπερ μεσεύει κατὰ τοὺς τόπους, οὕτως ἀμφοῖν μετέχει· καὶ γὰρ ἔνθυμον καὶ διανοητικόν ἐστιν· διόπερ ἐλεύθερόν τε διατελεῖ καὶ βέλτιστα πολιτευόμενον καὶ δυνάμενον ἄρχειν πάντων, μιᾶς τυγχάνον πολιτείας.—Arist. l. 7. c. 7. Polit.

own men than their neighbours' masters. The Asiaticks (that want no wit) are destitute of courage; therefore they remain in servitude and subjection unto others. The Grecians, as they enjoy the middle place for situation, so they participate with the Asiaticks for wit, and colder countries for conrage, in such proportion as inapts them to preserve their liberty, and to bear rule and sovereignty over others." Many comets at their first appearance are usually mistaken for fixed stars, reputed next in glory unto the moon; until their parallax bewray their place, and their sudden end discover their original to be corruption. Thus the brightness of the Grecian monarchy, whilst it was in rising or coming unto its height, mispersuaded their hearts, whose eyes it dazzled, that it was to endure like the days of heaven; whereas it proved but like 204
the glistering bubbles of the morning dew, which dissolve with the strength of those beams that gave them lustre. This is the only difference: the period of their splendour falls in the compass of an hour, and comets usually continue not many months. Whereas the rise and fall of kingdoms commonly outreach any one man's age or observation, and such as follow mark the occurrences of their own times more than their connexion with former: whence it is that secular politicians are always learning, and never attain unto the knowledge of what they seek. Howbeit Aristotle lived long enough to have seen his error; for Alexander (I take it) did die before him, and with Alexander's life the light of Macedon was extinguished, and the glory of Greece much eclipsed and abated. And though neither Greece nor Macedon have changed their clime or site, yet Aristotle's τὸ Ἑλλήνων γένος, "keen cocks of the game," have proved as arrant cravens since as the Asiaticks in his time were, as any

Europe ever hatched: infamous for effeminateness under the Romans, so deeply infected with the Asiatick luxury, that their very nature seemed to be tainted with servility, and to solicit that barbarous yoke which for a long time hath been laid upon them: but their present estate stands in more need of our prayers than their fore-elders did of our censure. To return unto their best times.

2. Never had any monarchy on earth, save one (if haply that may be called a monarchy), either so speedy an erection or so sudden a dissolution as the Macedonian had: the true reason of its sudden dissolution, as a writer[y] in this case unpartially tells us, was, because the foundation of it was laid by perjury. The true cause of its swift erection was partly the execution of God's justice upon the Persian and other nations, communicants with him in his present luxury, partly the accomplishing of God's antecedent will for the good of his church, as is elsewhere specified[z]. In Aristotle's time Alexander was, as Nebuchadnezzar had been, God's scourge or hammer to bruise all eastern nations.

3. The incredible success of Alexander's furious attempts were such as no heathen which outlived him could ascribe unto policy, wealth, or strength, or whatsoever means merely human; amongst others, the heroical Roman poet so describes his beginnings and proceedings, as if the fates had used his restless instinct to purchase fame but as a spur to make him run the race, and his sudden death as a curb to check his fury, lest he should transgress the bounds that they had set him.

——— Macetum fines latebrasque suorum
Deseruit, victasque patri despexit Athenas:

[y] Pausan. [z] In the fulfilling of that prophecy, Zech. ix. 9.

Perque Asiæ populos fatis urgentibus actus
Humana cum strage ruit, gladiumque per omnes
Exegit gentes: ignotos miscuit amnes,
Persarum Euphraten, Indorum sanguine Gangen:
Terrarum fatale malum, fulmenque, quod omnes
Percuteret pariter populos, et sidus iniquum
Gentibus. Oceano classes inferre parabat
Exteriore mari. Non illi flamma, nec undæ,
Nec sterilis Libye, nec Syrticus obstitit Ammon.
Isset in occasus, mundi devexa secutus,
Ambissetque polos, Nilonque a fonte bibisset:
Occurrit suprema dies, naturaque solum
Hunc potuit finem vesano ponere regi.

Lucan. x. 28.

Sed cecidit, Babylone sua Parthoque verendus.
Pro pudor! Eoi propius timuere sarissas,
Quam nunc pila timent populi. Licet usque sub Arcton
Regnemus, Zephyrique domos terrasque premamus
Flagrantis post terga Noti: cedemus in ortus
Arsacidum domino. Non felix Parthia Crassis
Exiguæ secura fuit provincia Pellæ.

Lucan. ibid. 46.

The Eastern nations (to our shame)
The Grecian pikes did dread
More than they do the Roman's dart,
Whose sovereignty is spread
Through climates hot, and climates cold,
Through all the winds that blow.
Did not proud race of Arsacus,
Us in the East o'ercrow?
Yet Parthia stout, which (unreveng'd)
Drunk Roman Crassus' blood,
To little Pella on safe terms
Of conquer'd province stood.

4. Some passages in this poet may serve as a motto to Apelles his device, who painted Alexander with a thunderbolt in his hand; as if he had been appointed for a sudden terror to nations far and near, astonishing more places with dread of his swift approach than

felt his stroke. But whatsoever the poet or painter could express was more excellently represented by God's prophet, many years before Alexander or Darius was born. *And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones towards the four winds of heaven,* Daniel viii. 5—8. What should move the prophet to compare the kingdom of the Medes and Persians to a ram [a], or what the comparison did in particular portend, is not so useful for me at this time to know, nor so easy to find, as the mystical portendment of his resembling the Macedonian kingdom to a goat. The Macedonians in Daniel's time, and until Philip of Macedon's time, who, as [b] Alexander in his choler upbraided

[a] The Persian rams, as some relate, are of an extraordinary greatness, and might serve as an emblem of Darius his excessive power in respect of Alexander's, if it were to be measured by visible conjecture.

[b] Non sum facturus verba, Macedones, ut vos ab ista domum redeundi cupiditate demoveam, (siquidem per me integrum vobis est quo libuerit abire,) sed ut intelligatis, quid ego vobis præstiterim, et qualem vos mihi vicem rependentes discedatis. Ac primum a Philippo patre (ut par est) ordiar. Philippus enim vos incertis sedibus errantes atque inopes, et plerosque sub pellibus degentes, exiguosque ovium gre-

them, first made them gentlemen, were poor shepherds or goatherds, scarce able to defend their own moun- 206
tains; no way likely to assault the Persian in his own land. Now as the swiftness of Alexander's expedition, and the fierceness of his onset upon Darius, is lively resembled by a goat running to push, so his tender years are excellently characterized in the Hebrew, which is, verbatim, *hircus caprarum*, which properly signifies rather a kid, than a goat come to full growth; or a male kid that followeth the dam. For Alexander, when he undertook this expedition against Darius, had more of his mother's countenance than of his father's. But the younger he was, the more ready he was to conceive hope of victory against all hope in the forecast of man. His too much haste had procured worse speed, unless he which had raised up his spirit to this attempt had a while arrested him with sickness at Tharsis. His abode there, and at Solis to sacrifice for his recovery, made Darius presume that he had run himself out of breath, and durst not look upon his puissant host, much less abide his push: and in this error, into which his own and others' presumptuous confidence in the multitude

ges in montibus pascentes, ac pro iis parum feliciter adversus Illyrios, Triballos, et finitimos Thracas bellum gerentes; pro pellibus chlamydes gestandas dedit, ex montibus in planitiem deduxit, paresque hostibus ad pugnandum effecit, ut non tam in locorum munitione deinceps, quam in vestra virtute salutem collocaretis: urbes vobis habitandas dedit, optimisque legibus atque institutis ornavit. Idem vobis in eos ipsos barbaros qui vos assiduis populationibus lacessebant, imperium acquisivit, et dominos e servis effecit: magnam Thraciæ partem Macedoniæ adjecit, oppidisque ad maritimam oram peropportunis in potestatem suam redactis, commerciorum facultatem aperuit, et tutas metallorum fodinas suppeditavit. Thessalos præterea, quorum metu olim exanimati eratis, vestro imperio subjecit: gente Phocensium afflicta, aditum in Græciam amplum et expeditum pro angusto et difficili vobis patefecit.—Arrian. de Expedit. Alex. lib. 7. pag. (151.) 456.

and magnificence of his army had led him, he makes haste to follow after Alexander, who, before either knew of other's removal, was gotten beyond him. The circumstances of their mutual error and of their conflict are so consonant to the prophet's predictions, that I must believe the same God, which decreed Absalom's fall by overthrowing Achitophel's counsel, had now fully decreed to ruinate the Persian monarchy by suffering Darius to listen more unto his flattering braggards than unto the mature advice of Amyntas. This wise captain[c], by birth a Macedonian, well knowing Alexander to be of such a forward spirit, as would scorn either not to seek his adversary any where, or not to encounter him wheresoever he found him, counselled Darius to expect him in the plain of Assyria, whither he assured him that he would shortly come, though to the great disadvantage of the Grecians. But that advantage which Alexander scorned to seek, the Lord, mighty in battle, vouchsafed to give him, as Alexander himself freely acknowledged, after he knew where Darius his army was encamped. Although he could hardly be brought to

[c] Darius interea cum exercitu castris locum delegerat, Assyriæ campum planum omnique ex parte apertum, qui et magnitudini exercitus maxime commodus esset, et ad ducendum equitatum peropportunus visus fuerat. A quo quidem loco ne recederet, Amyntas Antiochi filius, ab Alexandro transfuga, suaserat. Loci enim amplitudinem, et multitudini Persarum et impedimentis percommodam esse. Et mansit quidem eo loci Darius. Cæterum quum Alexander longiorem moram Tarsi ob ægritudinem faceret, neque minorem Solis, ubi et sacrificarat et ludos fecerat; multum etiam temporis in expeditione adversus Cilicas montanos posuisset: Darium a sententia sua abduxit, neque invitus ad id quod maxime cordi erat credendum, pertractus est. Siquidem ab iis qui ad voluptatem tantum loquuntur (maximo semper regibus cum quibus versantur, damno futuri) impulsus, Alexandrum ulterius progredi nolle sibi persuaserat, nuntio sui adventus perculsum.—Arrian. de Expedit. Alex. lib. 2. pag. (35.) 93.

believe that Darius had left his station and marched toward Cilicia, until his scouts brought him certain word that he had his adversary in his hands, so it would but please him to put them forth whilst time served to take him.

But the historian's censure of Darius his fatal miscarriage, will give the ingenuous reader better satisfaction than any discourse can be made upon it. To excuse his folly in not hearkening to Amyntas, which had been too gross if it had been merely natural, he saith, Καὶ τὶ καὶ δαιμονίον τυχὸν ἦγεν αὐτὸν, &c. which the translator misinterprets when he saith, *Ac fortasse Deus illum eo loci adduxit.* The author's words import thus much in English: 'Assur- 207
edly some divine misfortune led him into that place, in which his horsemen, his chiefest trust, would do him no service[d]; wherein nor multitude of men nor store of munition could advantage him, being so straitened that he could not make any true representation of the gaudiness or goodliness of his army.' It was a place so fit, as Alexander's council of war could not have made choice of a fitter, for delivering up the sceptre of Persia into his hands.

5. Alexander's solicitous, though superstitious, care to render thanks or supplications for good success

[d] Hoc etiam modo ejus animum commoverant, quod Darii equitatum facile universas Macedonum copias proculcaturum dicebant: quantumvis Amyntas Alexandrum, ubicunque is Darium esse audiret, venturum affirmasset: ibique eum opperiri suasisset. Cæterum deterior sententia, quod primo accessu gratior auribus accideret, vicit. Ac fortasse Deus illum eo loci adduxit, ubi nec equitatus magno usui esse posset, ut nec infinita hominum pariter et jaculorum ac telorum multitudo; sed nec ipsam quidem exercitus magnificentiam ostendere poterat: sed Alexandro facilem omnino victoriam præbebat. Oportebat enim Asiæ imperium Persis a Macedonibus adimi, quemadmodum Persæ Medis ac prius Medi Assyriis ademerant. — Arrian. de Expedit. Alex. lib. 2. pag. (35.) 93.

unto the reputed gods of every place where he touched in this expedition, is to me a sufficient testimony or assured sign that he had taken certain notice of some peculiar Divine instinct impelling him to undertake it. And not knowing from what special god this instinct or impulsion came, he tendered his service unto all he knew. Josephus his narration[e] of his devotion at Jerusalem, and great respect of God's high priest there, suits well with his usual demeanour towards other gods, related by this heathen writer, and is not improbable, from his princely kindness unto the Jews, to whom he allotted free habitation in the city called by his own name.—*Vide* Dion.

6. Many particulars, not impertinent to this discourse, I leave to the ingenuous reader's observation, that shall be pleased to peruse Diodorus Siculus, Arrianus, or Quintus Curtius. These present rightly applied may assuage that declamatory humour of some pedantic politicks, which would have Alexander's strange success to be the natural issue of Macedonian valour and Asiatic effeminateness. Such collections might be tolerated in a young student, appointed to make a theme or declamation in praise of masculine or frugal spirits, or in dispraise of feminine luxury. Howbeit, these politic conjectures are rather imperfect than altogether untrue: whether the authors of them did apprehend so much or no, I know not,

[e] Postquam namque e longinquo vidit candidatum populum, et sacerdotes ante agmen in amictu byssino pontificemque in stola hyacinthina auro distincta, tiarum in capite gestantem, præfixa aurea lamina Dei nomine inscripta, vix mentis compos, solus accedens ad pontificem Alexander, comiter salutans nomen Dei adoravit, quem se in Macedonia vidisse memoravit, dum deliberaret quo pacto Asiam posset subigere, ejusque hortatu expeditionem suscepisse. Quare et Deo immolavit, salvis ritibus in templum ascendens, gavisus admodum ostenso sibi libro Danielis, in quo Græcum quendam Persas debellaturum significabatur.—Lib. Antiq. 11. cap. 8. pag. 385.

but certain it is their opinion supposeth a Divine truth which they express not. It is not improbable in true divinity that the Persians were plagued, as for many other sins, so in special for their riot and luxury; and that God, to give them notice thereof, did make special choice of the Macedonian to be his scourge; a people remarkable in those days for austerity of life and masculine behaviour. For so it is usual with the just Lord, to upbraid those whom he severely punisheth for some predominant vice with some contrary virtue in them by whom he punisheth, as elsewhere is exemplified more at large out of Salvianus[f]. But unless the Lord had otherways disposed 208
of time and place, the Persian horses were not so effeminate or cowardly but they might easily have put the Macedonian pikes to flight, or trampled the footmen under their feet, as Darius' courtiers proudly bragged before their encounter. But pride goes before destruction, and God for this reason brought them into those straits, wherein they might perceive and see the truth of what his prophet had said, *An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength,* Psalm xxxiii. 17. And again: *Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One*

[f] Dupliciter in illa Hispanorum captivitate Deus ostendere voluit, quantum et odisset acrius libidinem, et diligeret castitatem, cum et Vandalos ob solam maxime pudicitiam illis superponeret, et Hispanos ob solam vel maxime impudicitiam subjugaret. Quid enim? Nunquid non erant in omni orbe terrarum barbari fortiores, quibus Hispaniæ traderentur? multi absque dubio, imo ni fallor, omnes. Sed ideo ille infirmissimis hostibus cuncta tradidit, ut ostenderet scilicet, non vires valere, sed causam: neque nos tunc ignavissimorum quorundam hostium fortitudine obrui, sed sola vitiorum nostrorum impuritate superari.—De Gubern. Dei, lib. 7. pag. 157.

of Israel, neither seek the Lord! Isaiah xxxi. 1. I should think myself *infideli deteriorem*, worse than the heathen writer, if I did not derive Alexander's victory over Darius from the Divine decree. "The time appointed," to use his words[g], "was now come that the Macedonian should take the empire of Asia from the Persians, as the Persians had taken it from the Medes, and the Medes from the Assyrians." Now who is it that can appoint the times but he which sitteth above the circles of the heavens, and moveth all things, being himself immovable?

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the Erection of the Chaldean Empire, and of the sudden Destruction of it by the Persian; with the remarkable Documents of God's special Providence, in raising up the Persian by the Ruin of the Chaldean Monarchy.

1. THE weapons of war wound more or less according to their skill or strength that wield them; so is the whole strength of war itself; so is the might and policy of every kingdom more or less successful to friends or hurtful to foes, according to the proportion which it holds with his will or purpose who is enstyled the *Lord of hosts*, the *Lord mighty in battle*. [h]Unless the Grecians had been generally liable to the Egyptians' censure, Ἕλληνες ἀεὶ παῖδες, "The Grecians are always children," in true antiquity,

g Parag. 4.

h *Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.*—Isa. liv. 15—17.

Aristotle might have informed himself and his followers, that the Assyrians, and other inhabitants of the southern coasts of Asia, had sometimes been a people so fierce and terrible in war, that Alexander, attended with the whole strength of Macedon, would have been but as a flock of sheep or a herd of goats to a host of wolves or lions; whilst Tiglath Pileser, Sennacherib, and other kings of Assyria were hammers in the hand of God, who could resist them? The strength of these Assyrians was so great, that the prophet foresaw the sudden advancement of the Chaldeans to the like or greater height or strength would hardly be believed by neighbour nations, Jew or Gentiles, until they felt it to their smart. *Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty* 209
nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it[i].

The true and final reason, as well of the Assyrians'

[i] Hab. i. 5—10.

as the Chaldeans' sudden greatness and success in battle, was the accomplishment of God's consequent will upon Israel and other neighbour countries, grown, by speedy increase of their iniquity, slaughter ripe. Howbeit the power itself or success of these two monarchies was a sure pledge of God's [j]antecedent will for their own greater good, so they had gratefully acknowledged his goodness in making them so great. But when these battle-axes began to lift up themselves against him which hewed the nations with them, he abated their edge and softened their temper. Of Nebuchadnezzar, whose excessive pride had made him prouder than the rest, that oracle was verified in an exquisite sense: *Man being in honour had no understanding, but became like the beast that perisheth*[k]. And that other remnant of the last forecited prophecy was literally fulfilled in him of whom it was meant: *Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god*, Hab. i. 11. And Belshazzar, his son, not taking warning by his humiliation, nor by the handwriting upon the wall, was surprised with sudden destruction, either the selfsame night wherein the hand was seen writing, or, which is more probable, the same night of some year following. He had filled the measure of his father's sins as full with iniquity as the bowls wherein he caroused were with wine: and that being full, to drink the cup of God's wrath was to him at that time necessary.

2. Now according to the Chaldeans' growth in former iniquity, the prosperity of the Medes and Persians did daily increase, and their success in war become every day more assured than formerly it had been;

[j] Vide S. Hieron. in cap. Isa. xlvii. 2, 3. tom. iii. 343.
[k] Psalm xlix. 20.

and at length, in such a sense as hath been observed, altogether fatal. The frugality of their private life and public discipline, specially in war, were qualifications, without which, perhaps, the Lord would not so highly have advanced them, or used them as his instruments in this service. But even these, and all other moral virtues unto which the politician ascribes their good success, were proper effects of God's consequent will, now absolutely set to plague the Chaldeans, and of his antecedent will for Israel's redemption; sure tokens withal of his love unto these conquerors.

The historical sincerity of Xenophon's intentions, or literal truth of his ingenuous relations, have not been so much disparaged by any other pretences whatsoever, if by any other at all, as by the heroical sweet exemplary disposition of his admired Cyrus, by his dexterity in consultations, and the extraordinary speedy success of what he put in execution. Whatsoever Xenophon hath said concerning his success, it doth not so far exceed the unsuspected stories of Alexander's swift growth in fame and greatness, as that did the greatest increase or excess which any one general, though much longer lived than Alexander 210
was, or which any one age did ever bring into the Roman state. The [1]best spirits which Rome had bred, whilst they looked on Alexander's picture and the map of his conquest, were ashamed of their own

[1] Fama est [Cæsarem], quum alio tempore in Hispania, legeret per otium Alexandri historiam, diu eum secum cogitabundum sedisse, inde lachrymas profudisse, mirantibus causam amicis dixisse; Annon videtur vobis gemendum, quum hac ætate, Alexander tot jam regna subegerit, me nihildum gessisse præclari? Ut ergo Hispaniam attigit, mox accinxit se operi, atque intra paucos dies cohortes decem ad priores viginti conscripsit.—Plutarch in Vita Jul. Cæsaris, tom. i. 712. F.

dulness, and slow progress of their victories. The Parthian, though not so masculine and valorous as in Alexander's time he had been, was able, in Pompey's judgment, to have given Cæsar the check after his Pharsalian victory; and in this persuasion Pompey had sought succour from him, had not Cato's indignation at the motion deterred him.

Si servire potes, miserum quid decipis orbem?

3. The odds of antiquity between Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, and Pompey, and other circumstances of several times, being rightly allowed, according to the rate of [m]former discussions to this purpose, will make the credit of Xenophon in his Institution of Cyrus, of Arrianus and Quintus Curtius in their histories of Alexander, and of the best Roman writers from Livy downwards, to any unpartial examiner muchwhat even. Or what if Cyrus, as he is set forth by Xenophon, did in his infancy, youth, or maturity, (all odds and allowances of antiquity rightly made,) far excel Alexander, Pompey, Cæsar, or any other whatsoever that lived after him, as well in dexterity of wit as in exemplary disposition of life, military or civil? all this may, without any just suspicion of poetical fiction, without the least transgression of a faithful historian's bounds, be referred unto a more intimate, more placid, and more loving touch of that spirit, wherewith all that much excelled others in any age have been in some measure or other inspired and incited to those exploits which have been performed by them. I cannot blame the latter Roman heathen for mistrusting Xenophon's relations in the forementioned book; but surely, that Christian which will not acknowledge

[m] See the first book upon the Creed, pag. 59, &c.

some extraordinary [n] fruits of God's peculiar calling, of his professed fatherly institution, instruction and protection of Cyrus, shall much forget himself.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there 211
is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, Isaiah xlv. 1—6.

The Spirit of God, so far as my remembrance or observation serves me, doth not elsewhere vouchsafe to grace any heathen prince with such honourable titles or affable speeches as these here mentioned are. Of God's own people, but few were called by their names before these were imposed by men: this is the

[n] It is memorable which Xenophon relates in his fourth book, at the time when Cyrus did prosecute the victory which he had gotten over the Babylonians in the first conflict, wherein their king was slain. Quum autem progrederentur, et nox adpetiisset, proditum est, Cyro et exercitui lucem clarissimam cœlitus oblatam fuisse: quo factum ut in animis omnium quidam horror erga Numen divinum, et in hostes confidentia existeret. — Xenophon. lib. 4. pag. 93. d.

prerogative of such as were types of the true Emmanuel. The very [o] characters which the heathen have made of Cyrus his amiable carriage towards men, his devotion and vigilant care to testify his thankfulness towards the gods for his good speed, are evident tokens of this his special calling to the present service, and of his seeking to express himself in outward [p] performances: albeit, young Samuel like, he could not distinguish the Caller's voice, wanting an Ely to instruct him; yet can no atheist be so impudent as to surmise that Esay, Jeremy, and Xenophon should conspire, like partners, to make a fair game by seeing one another's hands; for what common stake could they hope to gain by this practice? But to omit generalities for justifying Xenophon and Herodotus in relating such rare documents of Cyrus his infancy, (albeit these being compared with the former prophecy

[o] Ego vero sic aio, mi rex, inquit. Nam regem natura nihilo te minus ortum arbitror: quam ille rex est, qui dux apum in alveo nascitur. Illi enim semper apes ultro parent, ac quocunque loco manserit, ab eo nulla earum discedit. Quod si aliquo prodierit, nulla ipsum deserit. Tam mirificus eis amor erga principem hunc suum innascitur. Itidem erga te mihi quodam modo videntur hi homines adfecti esse.—Xenophon, lib. 5. p. 118. b.

[p] Cyrus autem domum reversus, precatusque Vestam patriam, et Jovem patrium, et deos cæteros in militiam domo profectus est, quum quidem et pater eum una prosequeretur. Ac postquam domo egressi essent fulgura, tonitruaque dextra ei oblata fuisse perhibentur. Quæ quum adparuissent, alio præterea nullo captato augurio perrexere; quod maximi Dei signa nemini obscura esse possent. — Xenophon, lib. 1. pag. 25. b. He knew by experience that he was set on work by some divine instinct, and this made him seek to please all which he took for gods, or divine powers. So Xenophon relates in his third book: Bonis avibus hostile solum invasit. Ut vero primum fines transierat, tellurem libationibus propitiam sibi reddidit, et deos atque heroas regionem Assyriorum incolentes sacrificiis placavit. Quibus peractis rursum Jovi patrio rem divinam fecit, nec si quis alius se deorum offerret, ullum neglexit. The watchword which he gave unto his soldiers in that battle wherein the king of Babylon was slain, was, Jupiter auxiliaris et dux.—Xenophon, lib. 3. pag. 79. d.

and sacred relations concerning Solomon, or others whom God hath called by name, are in themselves capable enough of credit,) we will descend to such particulars in heathen writers as are consonant to the sacred passages concerning the Babylonian war, and may serve to set forth the wisdom and providence of God in effecting his good purpose towards the captive seed of Abraham; for (according to the intent and purport of the former prophecy) the reader is always to bear in mind that the true and final cause of God's extraordinary blessings upon Cyrus, and of his conquest of the Babylonians, was the appointed deliverance of his chosen people, and the manifestation of his power and wisdom to the ends of the world.

4. A man of modern experience in treaties of leagues, and but of speculative acquaintance with the difficulties which interpose to hinder the association of lesser seigniories against mighty neighbour monarchs, would haply deem that Xenophon had framed his relations of Cyrus his success in linking bordering nations to the Medes and Persians by the model of some academical canvass, or suit for some annual office amongst fellow citizens. The Armenians, the Hyrcanians, the Cedrosians, with many other natural subjects to the Babylonian, all unacquainted with the project at the beginning, come over unto Cyrus with as great facility and speed as if there had been no greater danger in undertaking this doubtful and (in common experience) most desperate war, than in giving a free voice to one competitor before another in a free and popular state.

But Xenophon was not so mean a contemplative scholar as to commit so foul a solecism as this had been, albeit his purpose had been to poetize in these narrations. Poetical fictions must bear a true resem- 212

blance of probability: truths themselves must be set forth in their native colours, although they appear to ordinary experience most incredible. Such was the success of Cyrus in the former business, if it were to be derived only from his own wit or contrivance; but Xenophon might have good historical reasons not to suspect the Persian annals, or Persians' reports of Cyrus, as we have sacred authority to believe the matters reported by them. He that called Cyrus by his name before he was born, and had now set him up as competitor with the Babylonian for the Asiatic monarchy, had laid the plot and made the canvass for him before he set forth; and, which is principally to be observed, had given public warning to those nations which Xenophon mentions, more than threescore years before, to be ready with others in arms against Babel: *Set ye up a standard* (saith Jeremy[q]) *in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of* [r]*Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers. Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the Lord shall be per-*

q Jer. li. 27—29.

r The first occasion of Cyrus his expedition was to regain the revolting Armenians unto his uncle Cyaxares, king of the Medes. And these he won to their allegiance, partly by love, partly by sleight, having surprised some parts of their country (under pretence of hunting) before they were aware. See Xenophon, book 2 and 3, how Cyrus won the Chaldeans, which bordered upon the Armenians, to his side. And his fourth book, how the Hyrcanians, after the king of Babylon was slain in battle, revolted to him, and of the good service which they did him. And after them the Sacæ and the Cadusii, with Gobryas and Godatas, two great princes.

formed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. It is intimated by another prophet[8], that the Lord would have these prophecies concerning Babylon so remarkably fulfilled, that all the world might take notice of them: *The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay! Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them? Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.*

Cyrus in the beginning of this expedition was but Cyaxares his agent to regain the revolted Armenians. The war was managed in the king of Media his name, albeit God (according to Esaias' prophecy) did prosper Cyrus under him, as he did David under Saul. The fame did go of Cyrus among the Medes and

[8] Hab. ii. 2—8.

Persians, as it had of David through the host of Israel, Cyaxares hath slain his thousand, and Cyrus his ten thousand. The monarchy was to be settled on the Persian: Cyaxares was feoffee in trust for Cyrus, as Saul was by God's appointment for David.

213 5. Their[s] taking of arms was just, and in their own defence. Their first resolutions did reach no further than to the safeguard of their borders, much trespassed upon by the Chaldeans, until unexpected success and hopeful opportunities of better daily presenting themselves without seeking did invite them to come nearer. After they had gotten secret intelligence of the enemy's estate, many new associates, and quiet possession of so much of his dominions as would suffice to maintain their doubled army, they had no hope to conquer, no purpose to besiege the metropolites of the kingdom: that which after a doubtful consultation did chiefly sway them in the height of all their strength to continue their war, was the complaint of their trusty[t] confederates, justly fearing lest they should become a prey to the insolent tyrant, (much exasperated by their revolt,) as ready as able to take revenge upon them, if once their army should be dissolved. The overthrow of Crœsus following upon their resolution to continue the war, brought great access of new asso-

[s] Procedente vero tempore moritur apud Medos Astyages, et Cyaxares Astyagis filius, matrisque Cyri frater, Medorum imperio potitur. Rex autem Assyriorum quum Cyrus universos, non exiguam sane nationem, subegisset, Arabum regem imperio suo subjecisset, Hyrcanios subditos haberet, Bactricos oppugnaret, futurum existimabat, ut si Medorum vires debilitasset, facile finitimis omnibus imperaret.—Xenophon. lib. 1. p. 22. b.

[t] The Medes themselves were unwilling to follow the wars after the king of Babylon was slain, until the Hyrcanians did persuade them: and Cyrus himself was doubtful what to do, until he saw in what desperate estate he should leave Gobryas, if his army were dissolved. See Xenophon in the 5th book.

ciates and fresh supplies unto their army. Had Cyrus or his confederates understood the tenor of the commission which the Lord of hosts had sealed them before they undertook this war, they had, no question, given the onset upon Babylon before the overthrow of Crœsus, at that time when they marched by it; their written warrant, if they could have read it, was very express, and their invitation to attempt full of hope: *Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks. For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord,* Jer. l. 8—10. But such is the infinite wisdom of the Lord, that ignorance or concealment of his purpose from men, whom he employs in his service, is ofttimes the best mean to have it speedily executed by them. In this assembly of great nations from the north, foretold by Isaiah[u], besides the Armenians and Hyrcanians, the Lydians and the Cappadocians, with others mentioned by Xenophon, were included, without whose presence and assistance the enterprise had been in vain. The opportunity which Cyrus after his conquest of Crœsus took was the definite time appointed by God, but concealed from men, perhaps from the prophet himself which penned the commission. The entire presence of these nations now assembled, and skilfully set in array before the city (as God had commanded, for representing their terror and strength), was yet nothing so terrible to the be-

[u] Isa. xlviii. 20.

sieged spectators, as the fame of their absence had been when they were fewer. The [x]magnificence of
214 Babylon's walls did seem to outface them in the height of their bravery, and made them contemptible in her proud children's eyes. Cyrus himself despaired of doing any good by violent assault; his chief hopes were not in the multitude of his soldiers, but in the multitude of his enemies, more easy to be vanquished by famine than if they had been fewer. But this his project seemed to them ridiculous, being stored with provision for twenty years; within which space some of those companies which he had set by course to keep quarter before the city would forsake him, others they hoped would become their friends, as they anciently had been: and in this confidence they rest secure, as if they had thought to have outlaughed their sudden destruction.

6. The doom which our Saviour gave upon the fool in the Gospel doth so well befit the king of Babylon his wisest counsellors and followers, as if it had been framed of purpose for them. Each of them had said unto his soul, *Soul, thou hast store of provision laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and*

[x] Qui autem in muro stabant, obsidionem hanc irridebant, quod eis commeatus esset copiosior quam in annos viginti. Quæ Cyrus quum audiisset, in partes duodecim exercitum divisit, ut pars quælibet unum anni mensem in excubiis esset. Quibus iterum auditis, multo etiam Babylonii magis irridebant, qui cogitarent secum Phryges ac Lycios et Arabes, et Cappadoces futuros contra se in excubiis; quos omnes arbitrabantur animis erga se magis esse benevolis, quam erga Persas. Ac fossæ quidem jam actæ erant. Cyrus vero quum audiisset, celebrari Babylone festum, quendam ejusmodi diem quo Babylonii omnes nocte tota potarent et comessarentur: quamprimum eo die tenebræ accessissent, magna mortalium multitudine adhibita, fossarum ostia versus amnem aperuit. Hoc quum factum esset, aqua noctu in fossas manabat, et alveus fluvii per urbem tendens hominibus permeabilis esse cepit, &c.—Xenoph. de Instit. Cyri, Histor. lib. 7. p. 190. c.

be merry: but the Lord had said unto them all, by his prophet Daniel, *Ye fools, in this night of your merriment and solemnity of your god, shall your souls be taken from you; and whose then shall those things be that you have provided?* The hand which wrote that dreadful sentence upon the wall, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,* was not more visible to Belshazzar himself, than the finger of God in all this business is, or may be to such as will confer Xenophon's historical narrations with prophetical predictions.

7. First[y] Cyrus casts his trenches near the river, whether with purpose to interrupt or divide its course, or only for more commodious defence of his army, or annoyance of his enemy, Xenophon expresseth not[z];

[y] Ac primum quidem turres propter flumen extruebat palmis fundatas, quarum non minor erat, quam jugeri longitudo. Nam hac majorem etiam in longitudinem excrescunt. Has autem palmas operi propterea subjiciebat, ut quam maxime videretur id facere quod solent, qui ad urbem obsidendam sese comparant, ut tametsi flumen in fossam dilaberetur, ipsas turres non everteret. Etiam multas alias turres supra terram egestam excitabat, ut quam plurima essent excubiarum loca.—Xenophon. de Instit. Cyri lib. 7. Hist. p. 190. b.

[z] Yet it seems by Cyrus his answer to Chrysantas, that he had no hope to find any entrance into the city otherwise than by famishing the besieged. Ubi jam in castris essent Cyrus iis, quos oporteret, convocatis, dixit: urbem, socii, undique contemplati sumus: atque equidem, quo pacto quis adeo firmos et excelsos muros oppugnando capere possit, videre mihi non videor. Quanto autem plures homines in urbe sunt, quando ad pugnandum non exeunt, tanto citius fieri arbitror ut fame in potestatem redigantur. Nisi igitur aliquem alium modum habetis, quem nobis ostendatis, hoc ipso nobis istos expugnandos esse aio. Et Chrysantas inquit: Hiccine fluvius per urbem mediam labitur, cujus latitudo stadia duo superat? Ita profecto, ait Gobryas, ac tanta quoque profunditas ejus est, ut ne duo quidem viri, alter alteri insistentes, supra aquam exstare possint. Quo fit, ut fluvio sit urbs etiam munitior, quam mœnibus. Et Cyrus: Missa faciamus hæc, ait, mi Chrysanta, quæ viribus nostris potiora sunt.—Xenoph. de Instit. Cyri, lib. 7. p. 189. d. The reason why Cyrus did cast his trenches so wide and deep was, in his first intention, as it seems, only for the more commodious defence of his soldiers against the sallies of their enemies. Adhibita vero mensura quamprimum fossa latissima profundissimaque vobis erit agenda, pro parte cuique sua; quo paucissimis custodibus vobis sit opus.—Xenophon. ibid.

Herodotus is of opinion that this opportunity was rather taken when it offered itself, than sought by Cyrus when he first began to cast his trenches. However, the trenches being made were ready, when opportunity served, to rob the city of the deep stream, whose natural course was through the midst of it; and the stream diverted from its wonted channel left an easy entrance for Cyrus and his army under the walls and floodgate through which it passed. His stratagem to make this entrance into the city, now drowned with wine, opens to us the literal meaning of divers enigmatical prophecies: *A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols,* Jer. l. 38. Whatsoever Cyrus might intend, it was Jerusalem's and Sion's curse upon Babylon which gave success unto his stratagem: *The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Sion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry,* Jer. li. 35, 36. All these plagues here threatened are exactly fitted to the patterns of cruelty which Nebuchadnezzar had exhibited in the destruction of the holy city, and the derision of her and other captivated princes. Jerusalem in the present sense and fresh memory of her grief had thus complained: *Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel,* (therefore must Babylon be drawn dry of water,) *he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out,* Jer. li. 34. Therefore must *Babylon become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant,* ver. 37. It is

significantly foretold by Habakkuk that Nebuchadnezzar *had consulted shame to his house,* Habak. ii. 10; and it is the opinion of good interpreters, that the woe following should be particularly directed unto him and to his family: *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunk also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory,* Habak. ii. 15, 16. Divers authors of good note have left written, whether upon any better authority than tradition of the Hebrews I know not, (though that I know in many cases worthy of respect and credence,) that Nebuchadnezzar did use to make himself sport by making his captive princes drunk. This and the like insolences the Lord avengeth upon his son and people: *In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake, saith the Lord,* Jer. li. 39: and when the time appointed was come (whether that were the first or second year after the handwriting upon the wall) the Lord gave Cyrus notice of the Babylonians' intended anniversary revellings, whom he had now more infatuated than they at other times used to infatuate themselves. Cyrus his stratagem to dry up the water, either first conceived or put in execution upon this notice of their drunken festival, and whatsoever purposes of his that took effects, are all directed to the accomplishing of God's revealed purpose or consequent will upon Babylon, as it were so many arrows to their mark. The Lord of hosts was the archer, and Cyrus his bow, whose intentions against Babylon must therefore prosper,

because *the Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillers; and they shall lift up a shout against thee,* Jer. li. 14. There is not one clause of Cyrus his advice or exhortation to his followers, after they had found the river to be passable, or of his proclamation after their entrance through the water-gate, which Xenophon relates, but is parallel to some part or other of Jeremy's prophecies. We may boldly say all that Cyrus commanded was faithfully executed, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

8. That[a] which in reason might most daunt or deter his soldiers from ranging the streets of Babylon, was
216 opportunity of annoyance from the tops of their flat-roofed houses. But this inconvenience Cyrus by his good foresight turns to his advantage. "If any," saith he, "climb up to the tops of their houses," as it is likely many of them would, "we have god Vulcan our confederate: for their porches are very apt to take fire, their gates being made of palm-trees, *et asphaltites inunctæ*, which will serve as oil to cause them to take fire, and we have store enough of torches, pitch, and straw, to enlarge the flame after the fire be once kindled: by this means either we may enforce them to forsake their houses or burn both together." The execution of this stratagem would quickly amate men

[a] At si hoc in mentem alicui venit quod fertur esse formidabile urbem intrantibus; ne tectis illi conscensis hinc inde tela in nos conjiciant: id ipsum maxime vobis animos addat. Nam si qui conscendent ædes, opitulator nobis est deus Vulcanus. Et sunt eorum vestibula crematu facilia. Nam januæ palmarum e materia fabricatæ sunt, quæ ingens incendium cito parient; et copia picis ac stuppæ, quæ cito magnam flammam eliciunt. Quo fiet, ut vel celeriter necesse sit hos ab ædibus aufugere, vel celeritur exuri. Verum agite, arma capite, diis equidem juvantibus præibo.—Xenophon. de Instit. Cyri Histor. lib. 7. p. 191. c.

already affrighted with the sudden surprisal of the city. To this purpose the Lord had spoken long before: *The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight*[b], *they have remained in their holds: their might hath failed; they became as women: they have burnt her dwelling places; her bars are broken,* Jer. li. 30. *One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, and shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted,* vv. 31, 32. Xenophon tells us, that after Cyrus had given Gobryas and Gadatas in charge to conduct the army with all speed to the king's palace, *si qui occurrebant,* of such as[c] came in their way, some were slain, others retired again into the city, others cried out. That which made the noise more confused and the danger less apprehended was, that Gobryas and his soldiers, being Babylonians by birth, did counterfeit the roaring of that unruly night. Whatsoever occasion of distaste or

[b] Cyrus autem cohortes equitum per vias passim dimittebat, edicens, ut si quos extra domos invenirent, occiderent: at illis, qui adhuc in ædibus essent, per Syriacæ linguæ peritos denunciari præconio jussit, ut intus manerent. Quod si quis foris deprehenderetur, eum morte multandum. Et hi quidem hæc exsequebantur. — Xenophon. ib. p. 192. c.

[c] Vos autem, Gadata et Gobrya, demonstrate nobis itinera quum vobis ea cognita sint. Urbs enim tota videtur hac nocte comessationi esse intenta. Sed in excubias tamen ante regiæ portas incidemus, quod eæ semper istic collocentur. Non negligenda res est, ait Cyrus, sed eundum, ut quam maxime imparatos offendamus. Quæ quum essent dicta, pergebant. Si qui eis obviam venirent, partim cæsi peribant, partim retro vicissim fugiebant, partim clamorem edebant. Cum his et Gobryani clamores edebant eosdem, velut ipsi quoque comessationum socii. Simul pergentes, qua celerrime progredi poterant, ad regiam perveniunt. Et hi quidem Gobryæ Gadatæque adjuncti, portas regiæ clausas inveniunt: qui vero adversus regiæ custodes ire jussi fuerant, irruunt in eos ad ignem luculentum potantes, statimque hostili cum eis more agunt. — Xenophon. p. 191. d.

implacable discontent the proud king had given to these two captains, (whether those which Xenophon reports or others,) the final cause of that success which their bloody intentions against their native king did find, was the accomplishment of God's will revealed against him for his grandfather's cruelty against Jerusalem, whereof being gently warned by God's prophet he no way repented, but added gall to wormwood and thirst to drunkenness: *O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father*[d] *a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his*
217 *house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives,*

[d] So grandfathers are usually called fathers in scriptures, specially in respect of such as inherit after them. It is evident from Jer. lii. 31. that Evil-merodach did immediately succeed Nebuchadnezzar. This Evil-merodach was that king of Assyria which was slain in the battle betwixt Cyrus and the Babylonians related by Xenophon in his 4th book. A king much better beloved of his subjects than his son Belshazzar.

and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. *This is the interpretation of the thing:* MENE; *God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.* TEKEL; *thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.* PERES; *thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians,* Dan. v. 18—28.

9. Thus would Daniel have cured Babel, but she was not cured by him; howbeit Belshazzar was more kind to Daniel than to himself, than most great princes are to God's best prophets that reprove them: for *he commanded and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old,* Dan. v. 29—31. For it is not the bestowing of a scarlet robe, of court holy water, or of real honour in greatest measure upon God's servants, that can cover a scarlet sin in princes. The stain of blood can never be washed off, nor the cry of the oppressed blown away, (though the whole element of water, wind, and air were at their commands,) without the tears and sighs of the oppressors, whose hearts cannot be cleansed without repentant prayers. Jerusalem's sighs and tears in her sorrow had sunk too deep into the Almighty's ears to be expiated without the sacrifice of many sorrowful hearts and contrite

spirits throughout Babel: *Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his habitation,* &c. Jer. l. 17—19. Thus Israel is revolved from God's consequent will to his antecedent, and Babylon from his antecedent to his consequent will. And for the speedy execution of both parts of this his will for Israel's good and Babylon's hurt, the Persian monarchy is with such speed erected.

10. But some haply will here demand, wherein the similitude mentioned by Jeremy between the king of Assyria and the king of Babylon's punishments did consist. Sennacherib is the only Assyrian king whose disastrous end is registered in sacred story; and Belshazzar is the only king of Babylon that did parallel him in his plagues. Sennacherib was slain by his own sons, Belshazzar by his natural subjects, sometimes his dearest friends, but made his enemies by his unnatural cruelty[f]. Sennacherib, for blaspheming the God of Israel, was murdered whilst he offered sacrifice in the house of Nisroch his god: this was one remarkable branch or issue of Hezekiah his prayers against him in the temple, to wit, *that the Lord would declare himself to be a God above all the gods of the nations.* Belshazzar is slain in his royal palace whilst he solemnizeth the feast of his great god Bel; part of whose ceremonies were to praise the gods of silver

[f] He had slain Gobryas his son, because he was a better archer than himself: and gelded Gadatas, being jealous lest he should prove his corrival.

and gold, of brass, wood, iron and stone, &c. and to sauce this idolatrous luxury with such sacrilege and blasphemy as Daniel[g] had forewarned them to avoid. 218 Sennacherib had a large time of repentance allotted, from the sudden destruction of his army until his death. Belshazzar's disaster and dissolution of his empire fell out both in one hour; both, it may be, were more sudden, because his warning to desist from oppression, sacrilege, and idolatry were more express and solemn. The justice of God, though executed upon the Assyrian host by the more immediate hand of his power, upon Babylon by his wisdom in managing the opportunities and moments of war, was in both alike remarkable; in that both had their fatal sudden blow in that very night wherein they had lifted up themselves against the God of heaven, and *blasphemed the Holy One of Israel: it came to pass that night,* (not immediately after Ezekias had received Sennacherib's blasphemous message, but in the same night some two years after,) *that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand,* &c. 2 Kings xix. 35[h]. *And in that night,* saith Daniel, *was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain,* to wit, in that night which was solemnly consecrated unto the Chaldeans' god, and solemnized by anniversary custom; but whether in that night twelvemonth wherein the handwriting was sent from God, or more years after, is not certain: that it should be the selfsame night is, from many sacred circumstances, most improbable, if not impossible.

11. In what night soever it was, the sudden surprisal of Belshazzar's court and kingdom, though to

[g] Dan. v. 21.

[h] See Abulensis and Wolphius in their comments upon this place.

modern politicians it may seem strange, yet no circumstance related by any sacred writer is in itself so incredible as that which Aristotle, in his second book of his Politics, reports as credited by him; to wit, that some parts of this great city did not perceive the deadly blow which the principal parts of it had felt, till three days after it was given. It is a very inconsiderate note which Ramus, or he that set forth his translation of Aristotle's Politics, hath left in the margin of this text: *Hic locus indicat post Alexandri victorias hos libros scriptos esse, et tamen permirum sit in his Alexandri nullam mentionem fieri.* A judicious critic would rather have conjectured that these books had been written before Alexander took Babylon from Darius; in that there is no mention in all these books of Alexander's projects or success; fit matters (specially being fresh) for politic discourse or instance. At the least, he which had read and remembered the prophecies of Jeremy or Daniel concerning Babylon's destruction stood bound in Christian charity to have demurred upon the point, (before he had given sentence,) whether this place was not to be understood rather of Babylon's surprisal by Cyrus than of Alexander's taking of it, though it had been out of question that Alexander had taken it before Aristotle wrote his Politics. Aristotle might have more good authors than one for this report. Herodotus, we know, (whom Aristotle had read,) relates the like; whose entire narration concerning the taking of Babylon by Cyrus I have transcribed, that the reader may compare his historical relations with the prophecies before rehearsed, or hereafter to be cited.

Cyrus quum Gyndem mulctasset in trecentos et sexaginta rivos diductum, et alterum ver illuxisset, ita porro ire Babylonem pergit, Babyloniis eum pro-

ducto exercitu præstolantibus. Qui, ubi propius urbem ille promovit, cum eo conflixerunt, prælioque fugati in oppidum compulsi fuerunt. Ii tamen, quia Cyrum jampridem animadverterant inquietum esse, viderantque omnes pariter gentes aggredientem, comportaverant permultorum annorum commeatus: ideo- 219
que tunc obsidionem nihili faciebant. Et Cyrus, quum jam longo tempore nihil admodum res ipsius proficerent, inops consilii erat. Tandem sive alius ei anxio suggessit, sive ipsi in mentem venit quid in rem esset, sic statuit faciendum: Instructis universis copiis, partim qua fluvius urbem ingreditur, partim a tergo qua egreditur, præcipit ut, quum cernerent alveum posse transiri, illac urbem invaderent. Ita instructis atque admonitis suis, cum inutiliori exercitus parte abiit ad paludem. Eo ubi pervenit, quæ Babyloniorum regina fecerat circa flumen et circa paludem, eadem et ipse fecit. Nam revocato flumine, alveum ejus pristinum vado transibilem reddidit. Quod quum ita factum esset, Persæ, qui ad hoc ipsum instructi erant, per alveum unde fluvius Euphrates abscesserat mediorum fere femorum tenus fortiter Babylonem introierunt. Quos Babylonii, si factum Cyri prius aut audissent aut sensissent, haud dubie contempto eorum ingressu, pessimo exitio affecissent. Nam obseratis omnibus quæ ad flumen ferunt portulis, conscensisque septis, ipsi pro ripis stantes illos progressos veluti in cavea excepissent. Nunc ex inopinato eis Persæ astiterunt: et quum capti essent qui media urbis incolebant Babylonii, propter ejus tamen magnitudinem non sentiebatur (ut fertur) ab iis qui circa extrema habitabant. Sed quod forte dies festus eis esset, exercendis choreis atque oblectationibus operam dabant, donec plane hoc resciverunt. Atque ita primo capta est Babylon. Herodotus, lib. 1. pag. 87. c. 190.

One material circumstance there is in Herodotus, which is not so much as intimated by Xenophon, and it is this: Albeit the Babylonians could neither have prevented Cyrus in diverting the course of the river, nor withstood his entrance by its channel, yet might they with ease have stopped his passage along the channel, or his entrance into any street of the city, had they been mindful to shut those gates which at the end of every street did open upon the river. But that night being consecrated to revelling, the passage by water from one part of the city to another was freely permitted. They had a solemn custom of leaving those gates open that night, which on other nights were to be shut. And by this means destruction found a more easy entrance into that great city.

12. Some modern politicians have discoursed in folio against the vastness of cities as most incommodious for defence, taking occasion from Aristotle's exceptions against Babylon, which in his censure was a region, no more a city than Peloponnesus should be if it were walled about. But it was not Babylon's vastness which bred this insensibility when the day of destruction was come, that some members of her should not so much as feel any pain when others were utterly cut off. Should any prince now living, in confidence of this experiment, attempt the like upon Quinzie, Moscow, or if any other greater cities there be in the world, he might find their citizens better prepared upon few hours' warning than Babylon was in three days, unless perhaps he made his assault upon Moscow upon some great festival, wherein her citizens enjoy the liberty of Lacedemonian slaves, to be beastly drunk without censure. Cities far less than Babylon, only her matches in impiety, have been surprised with Babylonish stupidity, when the full measure of their

iniquity had brought forth the day of visitation. Carthage was far greater and fuller stuffed with all sorts of people when Scipio razed it than when the Vandals took it. And yet no member of it in the former calamity was so senseless of their fellow members' or of their common mother's grief, as the whole body was 220
when most of its natural members were cut off by the Vandal.

Fragor, ut ita dixerim, extra muros et intra muros præliorum et ludicrorum confundebatur; vox morientium voxque Bacchantium: ac vix discerni forsitan poterat plebis ejulatio, quæ cadebat in bello, et sonus populi qui clamabat in circo. Et cum hæc omnia fierent, quid aliud talis populus agebat, nisi ut, cum eum Deus perdere adhuc fortasse nollet, tamen ipse exigeret ut periret. Salvianus, lib. 6. pag. 139. "The noise of battle without the walls and the noise of sporting within the walls, the voice of dying men and the voice of riotous or drunken men, were so mingled and confounded, that a man could hardly have distinguished the outcries of such as fell in battle from the noise or cry of the multitude in the game-court. And by such doings what did this people else but solicit their own destruction at God's hands, who otherwise would not haply have destroyed them, or not at this time." With the like stupidity was Treers taken, none of the greatest cities then in Europe, though one of the wealthiest amongst the Gauls, after she had been thrice lanced. The very Babylonish madness did possess another city not far from Treers: such a lethargy had overspread the whole corporation, *ut principes illius urbis ne tunc quidem de conviviis surgerent, cum jam hostis urbem intraret: adeo etiam Deus ipsis evidenter, uti credo, manifestare voluit cur perirent, cum per quam rem ad perditio-*

nem ultimam venerant, eam ipsam agerent cum perirent. Salvianus, ibid. pag. 140. "Her governors did not break off their feasting and banqueting when the enemy did enter the city. God (as I conjecture) did purposely manifest the reason why they perished, in that they were doing that very thing when they perished which had brought them to utter destruction."

13. But of the causes, symptoms, or signs of Divine infatuation, elsewhere. Thus much I thought expedient in this place for the young reader's information, that albeit Babylon had been much greater in compass than she was, so that the measure of her iniquity had been less, the date of her prosperity might have been much longer. Chaldea might have sat as queen of nations, in despite of all politic prognostications which have been famed since her overthrow. The best service which this kind of critic usually performs to states or kingdoms is, to fix their bolts upon the gates of great cities after they have been ransacked by the enemy. But Babylon's iniquity being grown unto that settled height at which it stood in Jeremy's and Daniel's times, although her strength, her wealth, provision and policy had been far greater than they were, and contracted into a narrower room than the compass of her walls, the date of her sovereignty would have been as short, the device of the Lord would have been performed against her by other means, as sure and speedy as Cyrus used, if his stratagem had been defeated. For strength[i] of body or strength of wit, skill in arms or skill in policy, all of them are but the gifts of God; he can either deny them when he pleaseth, or inhibit the use of them where they most abound. He that commanded the fire

[i] See sect. 1. chap. 9. parag. 3. and chap. 10. parag. 2.

not to touch his saints in the furnace can as easily prohibit the strong to use his strength, the swift his flight, and intoxicate the politician's brain that shall displease him: *This is the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. Harness the horses;* 221 *and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines. Wherefore have I seen them dismayed, and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith the Lord. Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall towards the north by the river Euphrates,* Jer. xlvi. 1—6. *Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured. The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together,* vv. 11, 12. If a few shall chase a multitude we know the reason, the one was either less valiant or less skilful than the other; but why the valiant should turn their backs in the day of battle, it is God's prophet, not the politician, must resolve us: *They stood not, because the Lord did drive them,* ver. 15.

14. The Lord had given Moab wit and strength and wealth abundance: *He had been at ease from his youth, and he had settled on his lees, and had not*

been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither had he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed, Jer. xlviii. 11. But when he began to ascribe his prosperity to his strength or policy, to trust in wealth, and deride his poor neighbour Israel now going into captivity, the Lord, who is debtor to none, bereft him of all: *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles. And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel their confidence. How say ye, We are mighty and strong men for the war? Moab is spoiled, and gone up out of her cities, and his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. The calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast,* Jer. xlviii. 12—16, &c. *The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord. Make ye him drunken: for he magnified himself against the Lord: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision. For was not Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy,* vv. 25—27. *They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him. For thus saith the Lord; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab. Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs,* vv. 39—41.

As for Babylon, if she were stupid and blind, with-

out all foresight, fear, or apprehension of that hideous storm's approach wherein she perished, the wonder is less to any Christian than their stupidity, who think her destruction might by rules of policy have been prevented. For[i] though her defendants had been more in number than her proud walls could contain, though every one had been more stout than Hector, armed with more hands than Briareus had, though every one 222
of her star-gazing statesmen had had more politic eyes than Argos had, all had been one *totidemque oculos nox occupat una.* A messenger from the Lord of hosts had called for a dimness of sight upon her seers, and sung a lullaby to her soldiers' everlasting sleep: *I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts,* Jer. li. 57. So infallibly doth Divine justice observe the rule of retaliation, whereof I shall hereafter speak; *Though Babylon should mount up unto heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord,* ver. 53. For, *seeing her people hath entered into the sanctuary of the Lord's house, the Lord will do judgment upon her graven images,* ver. 52.

15. To conclude; the reason of Babel's stupidity, and whatsoever oversights the politician can discover

[i] Orto autem clamore ac strepitu, quum ii, qui erant intus, tumultum sentirent, et inspici rex juberet quid illud esset rei; apertis aliqui portis, foras procurrunt. Eas quum patefactas Gadatæi conspicerent, iruunt, et illos rursus fugientes intro sequuti, ac ferientes, ad regem accedunt: eumque jam erectum cum acinace, quem strictum tenebat, inveniunt. Hunc Gadatæi et Gobryani numero plures opprimunt, interfectis etiam iis qui regi aderant, ac partim aliquid objiciebant partim fugiebant, partim se quacunque re poterant tuebantur.—Xenoph. 7. p. 192.

in her (related by Xenophon or Herodotus), was, that the fulfilling of Jeremy's prophecies against her might become more manifest to succeeding ages: *How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord. The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left,* Jer. l. 23—26. *For she had carried away all that was in Hezekiah's house, all that his father had laid up in store, nothing was left,* as Isaiah had foretold, chap. xxxix. 3—6, the exact fulfilling of whose prophecy is registered by the sacred historian, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18. The sudden surprisal of the city and court of Babylon made the *finding of the treasure of darkness and the riches of secret places,* which the Lord by his prophet had promised to Cyrus, more easy than if his entrance at that time had been suspected or feared; for so the besieged might have had leisure to have hid their treasure where the enemy should hardly have found it.

16. But what special comfort is this to Sion, that Cyrus had done to Babylon as Babylon had done to her? This might satiate or somewhat allay the boiling heat of a revengeful mind; but is the misery of an enemy of like use unto God's people as was the brazen serpent? can the sight of it cure their grief, or beget true happiness in such as look on it? It is very probable that Babylon's spoils did help to re-edify Jeru-

salem: and albeit the God of Sion had other means in store (more by many than man can number or conceive) for reducing his people into their own land, we may notwithstanding, without censure of curiosity, safely conjecture, that the disgraces which Nebuchadnezzar and his successors had done unto the royal seed of Judah were the first seeds of their special favour and grace with Cyrus. Of the plagues threatened by Isaiah unto Hezekiah for shewing his treasures unto the Babylonians, it was one part that of his sons some should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon, Isa. xxxix. 7. Now it is unlikely that Cyrus would either make the Persians eunuchs, or trust the Chaldeans about his body. Daniel and other his fellows of the royal seed of Judah being made such unto his hand, were men as fit for his purpose as he could seek; and it was his purpose upon consultation 223
(as Xenophon tells us[k]) to have eunuchs next about him, as men most likely to be trusty. Daniel, or others of good note amongst this people, being admitted to favour, for to be of Cyrus' bedchamber would not be defective in procuring their country's good: and easy

[k] Quumque in mentem ei veniret, quid in se negotii suscepisset, qui multis mortalibus imperare niteretur, et habere domicilium in urbe inter illustres amplissima institueret, quam sic adfecta in eum esset, ut urbs alicui maxime infesta; quum hæc, inquam, expenderet, corporis sibi custodia opus esse existimavit. Quod item sciret, homines opprimi facilius non posse, quam inter vescendum, bibendum, lavandum, in cubili et somno: circumspiciebat, quosnam in his sibi maxime fidos habere posset. Arbitrabatur autem non posse fidum hominem unquam esse, qui magis amaret alium, quam illum, qui ejus custodia indigeret. Quamobrem alios, quibus essent liberi, vel conjuges genio congruentes, vel amores alii, naturæ quadam coactione judicabat ad eos maxime diligendos impelli. At eunuchos omnibus his carere cernens maximi facturos putabat illos, a quibus locupletari plurimum possent, et opem habere, si injuriis adficerentur, atque etiam honoribus ornari. A quo autem beneficiis in hos conferendis ipse superari posset, neminem fore censebat.—Xenophon. de Cyr. Instit. ed. Hutchins. lib. 7. p. 540.

it was for him that causeth darkness to bring forth light, that turneth the shadow of death into the morning, to raise up a blessing unto his people out of their expiring curse. But whether by this means or others, certain it is, that such of Judah as escaped Nebuchadnezzar's sword were detained captives to him and his sons, until the erection of the Persian monarchy, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20. *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up,* vv. 22, 23. This last passage compared with the forecited prophecy, Isa. xlv. 4—6, may acquit Josephus his report of Daniel's conference with Cyrus from all suspicion of fiction or uncertainty of tradition.

Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings, Dan. ii. 20, 21. He hath yet a fourth hammer in his hand to bruise and crush these western nations, as the three first had done the eastern, and yet appointed to take fuller vengeance upon these Jews (whom he had now redeemed by Cyrus) than the Chaldean had done, after the second measure of their iniquity became more full than the former had been.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of God's special Providence in raising and ruinating the Roman Empire.

1. THE lingering growth of the Roman monarchy hath made the print of God's special hand in erecting it less discernible than it had been in the sudden advancement of the three former. Nor was it come to any competent height before prophecy did cease in Jewry. So that we are (for the most part) destitute of such comments as God had furnished us with upon the histories of other monarchies; but whatsoever the registers of Rome's success have ascribed to fortune, we may recover it, by the former ruled cases, as entirely due unto God's providence. Now the ancient Romans were not of their later satyrical poet's mind: *Nullum numen abest, si sit Prudentia.* Not Felicity herself, whom they took for a goddess, much less was Prudence, or any other supposed patroness of inferior 224
virtues, so much honoured by them as lady Fortune; the multitude of whose temples testified they took her for their sovereign mistress. From this real testimony of the ancient Romans, (who best knew by what means their state was raised, or at least perceived it to be often held up and enlarged by means in particular unknown to them,) Livy and Plutarch give fortune [m] precedence of virtue (civil or martial) in the Roman

[m] Existimarunt multi, et inter cæteros Plutarchus gravissimus autor, populum Romanum in acquirendo tanto imperio majore fortunæ prosperitate quam virtute usum esse; idque vel ipsiusmet populi Romani autoritate constare. Neque enim fortunæ tot templa dedicasset, nisi ei victorias suas acceptas tulisset. Nam Romæ nulli deorum dearumve tot erant posita templa, uti Fortunæ. Eidem huic sententiæ videtur Livius quoque suffragari, eo quod in recitandis orationibus imperatorum, nunquam solius virtutis mentionem facit, sed fortunæ auxilium ad-

territories, as being a more special benefactress or principal foundress of their empire. Machiavel is of a contrary mind, persuaded thereto by such a reason as argues he had not God or his providence in his thoughts, that his thoughts were not his own when he conceived it, so dissonant it is to truth and his own politic principles. His words are these; "If no other state did ever compass such a mighty empire as Rome did, why should this be attributed to fortune, rather than to good laws and discipline?"

2. With Plutarch and Machiavel it fares just so in this controversy as it usually doth with other controversors; each of them hath the truth under his level whiles he oppugns the adverse opinion; both of them overshoot it whilst they deliver their own. Plutarch rightly denies the moral or civil goodness whether of Roman laws or lives to have brought forth their greatness. He erreth as much in adjudging all that to Roman fortune whereto Roman virtue had no just title. Notwithstanding, if by *fortune* he meant any certain latent cause more than human, which did convey success to the current of Roman policies by secret and hidden passages, his meaning is better than his manner of expressing it. To think thus charitably of this ingenuous philosopher we have reason, as knowing him to be a perfect enemy as well to Epicurean chance as to Stoical fate, and therefore no adversary of Divine Providence. In favour of Machi-

jungit. Ego vero contrarium sentio, neque Plutarchi hanc opinionem defendi posse contendo. Nam si nulla extitit respublica quæ tantum imperium uti Roma acquisivit; cur id fortunæ, potius quam bonis ipsius legibus et institutis, tribuamus? Virtus exercituum, et imperatorum singularis industria imperium Romanum peperere: res autem partas conservarunt bona reip. institutio, rectaque gubernandi ratio a primo legislatore constituta: uti deinceps copiosius differemus. — Disput. Nic. Machiavel. lib. 2. cap. 1. in initio.

avel's opinion, who deserves no favour himself, thus much on the other side might be said: If the ancient Romans had been as vain as the Grecians, as luxurious as the Asiaticks, as perfidious as the Carthaginians, as uncivil and barbarous as many nations which they conquered, they should not have been so constantly fortunate in their enterprizes at home and abroad as Livy and Plutarch had observed them to be. That is, in our language, Divine Providence would not have destined them unto that greatness unto which at length they grew, if they had been always, or for the most part, as bad as in the period of their prosperity they proved: for albeit God be debtor unto none, yet the abundant riches of his bounty will not suffer him to leave moral virtues, or constant execution of laws comparatively good, unrewarded with blessings temporal. All this notwithstanding will not infer what Machiavel undertook to prove, that the Romans did raise themselves more by virtue than they were raised by fortune; if we take fortune (as in all probability Plutarch did) for an hidden fountain, secretly feeding those courses which the Romans took for their good 225
with success and speed far above their expectation. Under this indefinite latitude of unknown causes, the Divine Providence, or *cœlestis fortuna* (as the Pythagoreans term it), may be comprehended, and this Divine Providence or celestial fortune it was which raised the Romans; they did not raise themselves by their virtues: for we do not use to say that princes' favourites do advance themselves, albeit princes would not advance them to such great dignities as they enjoy, unless they were in some measure qualified unto their liking.

3. Some nations have been, others might have been, more observant of better laws than the Romans knew,

and have used the same discipline of peace and war, even all their policies, with greater sincerity of good intentions than they did; and yet not have propagated their sovereignty over others half so far as the Roman empire was (by God's special providence) propagated. For virtues moral, and civil discipline, or reformation of misdemeanours, (though all more exact than the practice of any nation could hitherto patternize,) are no such meritorious causes of temporal prosperity or dominion, as may bind God in justice to dispense the one in greatest plenty where the other most aboundeth. Without these qualifications the Romans had not been capable of such prosperity as God in bounty bestowed upon them; but the true positive cause of their extraordinary greatness was the special service whereto his wisdom had appointed them. The rule of his liberality in disposing kingdoms, is the correspondency or proportion which temporal greatness holds with the execution of his will; whether for punishing those which have made up the measure of their iniquity, or for the propagating or preservation of his church already planted, or for preparing or ploughing up the hearts of wild and unnurtured nations for better receiving the seed of his gospel.

4. When the measure of that prosperity which God, for these and like purposes, had allotted Rome heathen, and her iniquity became full, she and her provinces became a swifter prey to barbarous nations, some scarce so much as heard of before, than any neighbour countries had been to her. The incredible success of the Goths and Vandals, of the Franks and Almains, &c., but specially of the Huns, whose furious progress was like to the vulture's flight, and seemed to presage the slaughter which they made, will justify the probability, either of Xenophon's stories concerning

Cyrus, or of Curtius, Arrianus, or other writers, of Alexander's conquests. Was it then natural policy or skill in war which did seat all or most of these barbarous nations in these western countries? virtues they had not many amongst them, yet each of them some one or other commendable quality, which did manifest the contrary predominant vice or outcrying sin in the Christian people which God had appointed them to plague, as Salvianus[n] hath excellently observed. Howbeit this great power was not given them altogether to destroy others, but withal to edify themselves in the faith, and to be made partakers of God's vineyard, which he had now in a manner taken from these ungrateful husbandmen whom they conquered. The Franks became Christians through fear of the Almains[o]: dread of the Huns did drive the Burgundians to seek sanctuary in the same profession. And no question but such of the ancient Christian inhabitants as outlived these storms did believe God and his ser- 226
vants better afterward than they had done before. Never were there any times more apt or more powerful to kindle devotion in such as were not altogether frozen in unbelief, or benumbed with the custom of sinning, than these times were. Rome, which had been the watch-tower of politic wisdom, became more stupid than Babylon had been when the day of her visitation did come upon her. Her citizens (were a mere politician to be their judge) deserved to be buried in their city's ruins, for not awaking upon such and so many dreadful warnings as she had. Extraordinary prophets the Christian world at that time had none, because it needed none; the prophecies of ancient

[n] De Providentia, lib. 7.

[o] Vide Annonium, lib. 1. cap. 15. See the Treatise containing the Original of Unbelief, &c. chap. 18. sect. 1.

times did so well befit them, as if they had been made of purpose only for them. Nor Sennacherib, nor Nebuchadnezzar, in the prime of their strength and power, could better have brooked that title (though given them in express terms by God) which Attilas (as it seems from certain apprehension[p] of his extraordinary calling to do the like service) had inserted into his royal titles; *Malleus orbis et flagellum Dei*[q], "The hammer of the world and scourge of God." The fame of Alexander's first victories was nothing so terrible to Asia, as the noise of this Scythian thunderbolt was to the utmost parts of Europe, and would have been to Africa and Asia, unless the Lord had put his hook into his jaws, when he begun to swallow these and other nations in his greedy hopes. But when the time of his commission drew near to an end, this Samson had a Dalilah to abate his strength. He that had made himself sport with others' misery, and counted it his greatest glory to shed much blood, was choked with his own in his marriage bed[r]: these were the first fruits of his luxurious nuptial feasts; what the aftercrop was we leave to God.

5. The known success of these Huns throughout Hungary and other parts of Europe, may serve as a leading case to determine the question proposed between Plutarch and Machiavel; their valour or

[p] Other barbarians had the like apprehension of their calling to the like service, as Salvianus witnesseth. Potuerant (Vandali) ergo illic degere, nec timebant: sed illa utique cœlestis manus quæ eos ad punienda Hispanorum flagitia illuc traxerat, etiam ad vastandam Africam transire cogebat. Ipsi denique fatebantur, non suum esse quod facerent. Agi enim se divino jussu ac perurgeri. Ex quo intelligi potest quanta sint mala nostra, ad quos vastandos atque cruciandos ire barbari compelluntur inviti, secundum illud quod vastator terræ Israeliticæ rex Assyriorum ait.—Esa. xxxv. and Jer. xxv. Salv. lib. 7. de Gubern. Dei.

[q] Chronica Hungarorum.

[r] Vide Chronica Hungarorum, et Bonfin. lib. 7. dec. 1.

strength of war was not so much as known by fame to Europeans until they felt it. The passages into Europe, out of these places of Scythia which they inhabited, was unknown unto themselves; much less did they dream of invading the Roman empire, until he that had decreed to make them a scourge to Europe did lay a train to teach them the ready way unto it. The manner[s] of their introduction was, in the philosopher's language, by as mere a chance or fortune as if a sexton should find a casket of gold whilst he digs a grave. They had no other intention, that very morning wherein they first became acquainted with the confines of Europe, than to chase the hart, and the hart no other desire than that which was merely natural, to save his life. That this reasonless creature, by seeking thus to satisfy his natural desire, should shew these Huns a safe passage through the fens of Mæotis into Europe, was mere chance in respect of them or their shallow forecast, but providence in respect of him who hath the product or issue of every attempt possible *in numerato*, as we say, in ready coin, who can so temper all occurrents at his pleasure, as that the selfsame ingredients may be a wholesome potion unto some and deadly poison unto others; and so combine the careless intentions of men and the desires of brute beasts, as they shall become 227
more faithful confederates for accomplishing his will, than men can be (albeit they purposely conspire together and bind themselves by solemn oath or sacrament) for effecting their own designs.

6. The report which these roving hunters had made to their countrymen of that pleasant land, into whose confines the chased hart had led them, did invite the chief heads of their clans, with their several rascalities,

[s] Bonfin. lib. 2. dec. 1.

to flock into Europe like beggars dismissed out of a prison invited to a solemn banquet: and their hunger-starved appetites being once fed with variety of uncouth pleasures did whet their wits and arm their spirits to attempt greater matters than they could conceive before: *Artis magister ingeniique largitor, venter;* their bellies taught them new arts and practice of inventions, unsuspected unto Christians. The mixed inhabitants of that country, which from them was after termed Hungary, having sufficient warning of their intended invasion, had prepared a competent army, whose leaders presumed they were more safely guarded against the sudden assault of their barbarous enemies for one night by the river of Danow which ran between them, than they could be by any wall or trench: and in this presumption they rested as secure, for that night, of the Huns as the Babylonians were of Cyrus. It is very likely that Detricus, general for the Romans, and Matrinus, alias Martinus, (or Macrinus,) chief commander for the Pavonians, one or both had read how Cyrus had divided the river Gyndis, and so turned the course of Euphrates in one night, that the usual channel of it became passable to his foot soldiers before the morning. But that the like should be attempted upon Danow[t] was not credible; to be effected by their enemies they knew it impossible: and what other passage there was possible for these Huns to find, being utterly destitute of ship or boat, they could not suspect. But they bought the knowledge of their new invention a great deal too dear, with the loss of the better part of their army, which encamping in the open fields were pitifully slaughtered, like wandering sheep, by the Huns[u], who, with the help

[t] See chap. 62. parag. 11. [u] Bonfin. lib. 3. dec. 1.

of bladders, had swum over to the number of a hundred thousand in the deadest time of the night. This sudden disaster, which, being now past, might in some modern politicians' judgment easily have been prevented, did so lessen the Roman forces, that albeit they became conquerors in the next conflict, yet purchased they victory with the loss of so many soldiers, that they were not able to stand before the multitude of their furious enemies in the third encounter; and to try them the fourth time they had no courage. The stump of that arrow which Detricus carried in his forehead to Rome, in witness that he had confronted his enemies, and was not wounded in the back, did pierce the hearts of some and daunt the spirits of other Romans. And the fresh bleeding experiments of these Huns' incredible fury might well occasion that generation and their children to flatter their cowardly fancies with forged tales, as if it were no disparagement to the Romans (though as yet in highest esteem for valour amongst the sons of men) to be outdared by an enchanted generation of infernal monsters, born of witches and begot by devils. For such legends of these Huns' original have gone for current amongst good writers[x], and are not altogether

[x] Aëtius postquam audivit Attilam exercitum infinitæ multitudinis ductare in Gallias, obviandum mature putavit: et, ut ipse dicere solebat, enitendum, ut Alastores, seu mali genii procul ferro exterminarentur: alludens ad naturam umbrarum et dæmonum, qui gladium eductum timent et minas, ut Psellius ait; ac præterea scite alludens ad originem decantatam Hunnorum ad dæmones referendam. Nam cum Filimer rex Gothorum post egressum Scanziæ insulæ terram Scythicam ingressus, reperisset mulieres quasdam magas malefica arte populum vexare, longe fugatas adegit in solitudinem, ubi spurci ac vagi spiritus in complexum suum eas illexere, humanæ figuræ, sed inhumanæ prorsus mentis et impietatis supremæ edituri sobolem, nempe Hunnos, rapto et venatu ali consuetos.—Forcatulus, lib. 5. pag. (722.) 331. ex Jornande in lib. rerum Getic. Fabulosum putarem, nisi D. Augustinus Sylvanos et Faunos, agrestia veterum

out of date in some places unto this present day. But the Romans did want a Marius, Sylla, or Ca-
228 millus, to be their dictator in these times; Detricus was no Julius or Germanicus: what the best of these could have done or durst have attempted, had they been living then, is more than the spirit of any now living can divine; he that had made these in their times valorous had now decreed the beggarly Huns should be victorious, and *there is neither counsel nor might against the Lord.*

7. Or if this be not canonical scripture with politicians, let us examine whether the evidence of truth, manifested in the historical narrations whereon Machiavel comments, have not extorted as much from him, in a manner against his will, and contrary to his purposed conclusions, as the author of truth in this point hath taught us. "He," saith Machiavel[y], "that will compare the Romans' wise carriage of state businesses for many years together, with their ill managing of matters when they were invaded by the Gauls, shall find them so different, as that the latter gross error may seem to have been committed by another people, not by the same. So strangely doth fortune" (so he

numina, improbos extitisse muli-eribus, appetisse et peregisse concubitum retulisset: et dæmones quosdam, quos inquit, *Dusios* Galli nuncupant, eadem cupidine inquinatos pro comperto haberetur.—Ibid. pag. 332. ex Augustino, lib. 15. de Civit. Dei, cap. 23.

[y] Disput. lib. 2. cap. 29.—Quod si quis igitur animo comprehendat res a populo Romano, prius tam præclare, longo annorum numero, gestas: iisque has conferat, quas adversus Gallos gessere: tam diversas esse comperiet; ut non ab uno eodemque sed diversis populis, gestæ esse videantur. Usque adeo scilicet, occæcat fortuna animos hominum, ait Livius; cum vim suam ingruentem refringi non vult. Quo fit, ut qui in perpetuis periculis versantur, minus vituperari debeant; et minus laudari qui continua fœlicitate fruuntur: cum et illos et hos fata eo trahere videantur: neque consilium illorum ad resistendum malis, neque horum virtus ad comparandam fœlicitatem multum facere queat, etc.

now accords in terms with Livy, whom herein he contradicted before) "blind the judgments of men when it is her pleasure not to have her power controlled, whose authority is so great, that neither they which are commonly exposed to danger deserve much blame, nor they much praise which enjoy perpetual felicity. Fates may so strongly draw both parties this way or that way, as the policy of the one shall not be able to prevent the evils which happen, nor the other's virtue be sufficient to bring forth good success." In fine, taking *fortune* and *fates* for terms equivalent throughout his whole discourse, he concludes[z] for Plutarch; "that the greatness of the Roman empire was decreed by fate; and with reference to this end, as Rome could not in her growing age be overthrown, so it was expedient that she should often be oppressed and afflicted, that her statesmen might become more wary and wise, for procuring that greatness which fates had decreed to accomplish by them:" wherefore, that all these might take place, the fates (which, as he grants, use means convenient for effecting their purpose) "had put Camillus to exile, not to death; suffered the city to be taken by the Gauls, but not the Capitol; and that the city might be taken with less ado, they had likewise ordained that the greatest part of

[z] He concludes: Cum urbi Romæ tanta imperii magnitudo fatalis esset; opprimi ac vehementissime affligi eam oportuit, ut deinceps cautior prudentiorque fieret, ad tantam imperii molem acquirendam: deleri tamen plane non debuit. Itaque ut omnia hæc ita succederent, fata Camillum in exilium misêre, non necaverunt, urbem a Gallis permisêre occupari, non Capitolium: utque commodius occupari urbs posset, effecere, ut major exercitus pars ex prælio non Romam, sed Veios fugeret. Et (ut omnia uno quasi fasce comprehendam) effecerunt, ut ad avertendum a republica tantam malorum molem, nihil a populo Romano prudenter sapienterque fieret: ad defendendum Capitolium et recuperandam urbem jam captam omnia commodissime instructa essent.—Disput. Nic. Machiavel. lib. 2. cap. 29.

the Roman army, being discomfited by the Gauls, should not retire to Rome, but fly to Veios. To knit up all" (as he speaks) "in a bundle, it was the ordi-
229 nance of fates that the Romans should for this turn use neither their wonted wit nor discretion for averting the evils which befell them, and yet have all things made ready to their hands for defending the Capitol and recovering of the city. By the forecast of fates, not of the Romans, it was that exiled Camillus, who was no way guilty of the wrongs which the senate had done unto the Gauls, no way obnoxious unto them, but free from all obligements, should be at Ardea with one army, and expected at Veios by another, that they might with joint forces assault the Gauls when they least expected, and so recover the city."

8. Had Machiavel told us what he meant by *fate* or *fortune*, we might either quickly agree with him or easily confute him, as disagreeing most from himself: whatsoever he meant by them, it had been a point of honesty in him to have craved pardon of Plutarch for contradicting him in the former discourse, seeing he borroweth Plutarch's own language in this comment of Rome's surprisal by the Gauls. If Machiavel by *fates* or *fortune* understand some branch of God's decree or providence, *mentem teneat, linguam corrigat.* For though he comment upon a heathen writer, it would no way misbeseem him sometime so to speak as men might suspect him to be a Christian. But not to question in what signification he used the words *fates* or *fortune*, the real attributes which he gives to fate or fortune cannot belong to any power in heaven or earth, save only to the only wise invisible God, for who can blind the minds of men, of such politic wise men as the Romans were, save only he who made our souls,

and giveth wisdom to whom he pleaseth? who can make choice of excellent spirits for managing human affairs present, or entertain occasions offered for great achievances? who again can deprive such men (men so qualified as Machiavel would have them) of life, depose them from their dignities, or so abate their strength, as they shall not be able to make resistance when evils are determined? That Power only can do all these which knoweth all things, worketh all things, determines all things, ruleth all things. Yet all these attributes here specified hath Machiavel bestowed on fate. Either was this man stricken with heathenish blindness for detaining the truth in unrighteousness, or else in seeing thus far into events in his judgment fatal, he might have seen God's providence ruling in them, and disposing of all human affairs whatsoever. The like contemplation of fatal or fortunate events led Cominæus, a man as well seen in matters of state as Machiavel was, unto a distinct view of Divine providence, as shall be shewed hereafter[a]. Whatsoever effect these observations wrought in Machiavel, the perusal of them will lift up the Christian reader's heart to sing with Daniel: *Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his. He changeth the times and seasons: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.*

9. But though we could make this or the like orthodoxal construction of Machiavel's meaning in this discourse, though fate and fortune in his language were the same that God's providence is in ours, yet the use which he makes of this his doctrine would neither be consonant to his own principles elsewhere delivered nor to the eternal truth: *Hoc unum pro-*

[a] See chap. 29. parag. 3.

nunciabo de fortunæ viribus et fati necessitate, quod historias omnis generis percurrenti facile apparebit, homines fati necessitatem evitare non posse: sed faciliorem eventum iis, quæ ab eo impendent, efficere, eumque promovere; adeoque parcarum telas texere, non retexere, aut rumpere. Quod etsi ita se habeat,
230 *non decet tamen, ut animum abjiciamus, nosque plane committamus fato; sed, quacunque fortuna aspirante, bene speremus, diligenter prudenterque rebus nostris provideamus: quod fatorum viæ et rationes producendorum effectuum obscuriores sint, quam ut a nobis intelligi queant.* Machiavel. lib. 2. cap. 29. "What great matter is this, which is so plainly written in histories of every kind as he that runs may read it?" His resolution is this, that "men cannot avoid the necessity of fate, but rather facilitate the events by it decreed: so unable are they to undo the contrivances or contextures of destiny, that by how much the more they struggle with them, they weave and knit them faster." But shall state-pilots for this reason strike sail to fortune, and suffer the world to float whither fates do drive it? "No, rather bear out against all blasts of chance, because the ways of fate, and manner how it brings its matter about, are so obscure that no wit of man can discern them." But what boots it us to know the ways of fates to be so obscure, that they cannot be known, if neither known nor unknown they can be avoided? It would inspire our endeavours with greater alacrity, and our endeavours would be blessed with better success, were we taught (as the truth is) that such events as politicians term *fatal* are in their nature alterable, though not by us or by any human skill or policy, yet by him whose almighty aid is always ready for us, so we seek it with due humility. But Machiavel (if I mistake him not) was once of

opinion that fates and fortune interpose their authority only in some more principal human affairs; he acknowledgeth no general providence over all. The general maxim whence he falsely derives his fruitless inference is, 'that God's decree' (whereof fates good or bad are necessary branches) 'is altogether immutable.' The most necessary, immediate, and most useful consequent of which truth is this: As long as the parties against whom he decrees evil continue the same, the evil decreed is as immutable as his decree, and men by seeking to avoid it by their wit or strength do draw it more speedily or more heavily upon them. For it is impossible that human power should not be foiled whilst it opposeth itself against omnipotency, or the devices of human wisdom not be defeated whilst they counterplot wisdom infinite. But though in the Almighty or in his decree there be no shadow of change, yet, as Daniel speaks, *he changeth times and seasons;* and in that his mercy is immutable, he is always ready to repent him of the evils forethreatened, when men repent them of the evil for which he threateneth them. Or, in terms perhaps more proper, it is one essential part of his immutable decree, to alter the events decreed or foresignified (be they good or bad) according as men alter their minds for better or worse. But how fates are invited or may be avoided, we are to speak more particularly hereafter.

10. The very instance whence Machiavel framed his forementioned aphorism will be a fit example for illustrating our present rule. The Romans (as he observes) were usually most religious observers of the law of nations, and whilst they continued thus God's blessings did rest upon their policies: but at the time when the Gauls invaded Italy, the Fabii, being sent ambassadors in a treaty of peace, unadvisedly put on the girdle of

war, and slew a standardbearer of the Gauls in defence and quarrel of the Clusini, betwixt whom they should have been indifferent arbitrators. And, instead of just punishment (which by the law of nations was, to have been delivered up unto the enemies whom they had
231 wronged), the Romans did grace them with the office of tribunes at their return, and appointed them chief managers of that war with the Gauls which their insolency had provoked[b]. The success whereof was such as the Israelites had before Achan's sacrilege was punished by Joshua. Rome's present calamity had spread much further, if the whole state had been as deeply infected with this foul crime as the whole senate and people then resident at Rome were: *Sed Veios, habitante Camillo, illic Roma fuit:* inasmuch as the life and soul of the Roman estate did then reside in the exiled Camillus and his company, (who had suffered much wrong from the Romans, but had done none unto the Gauls,) it pleased the Lord to raise up his spirit to rescue the city from their tyranny, who would have revenged the offence committed with greater severity than his eternal equity had appointed for this time, wherein Rome's iniquity was not fully ripe for utter destruction.

11. To do justice, though to a public enemy, is a fundamental rule of prophetical and Christian policy, whereto Machiavel hath one and Plutarch another

[b] Imprimis igitur habenda ratio est earum rerum, quæ fato ipso, seu astrorum influxu, evenire videntur; et quibus ut resistamus, fortuna non permittit. Quarum exemplum luculentissimum est id, quod populus Romanus in clade Gallica accepit. Nam cum fatis urgentibus, tanta moles mali instaret: primam occasionem ad illam accelerandam dederunt tres Fabii, legati, qui cum agere debuissent de pace inter Clusinos et Gallos, contra jus gentium, pro Clusinis adversus Gallos prælio decertarunt: atque ita Gallorum irama dversus populum Romanum provocarunt.—Machiavel. lib. 2. cap. 29.

discourse very pertinent. Thus to do is good and acceptable in the sight of God, without whose special direction and benediction the practice of most approved rules of policy proves more fruitless, if not more dangerous to great estates, than choicest receipts do to illiterate or ordinary patients, being administered without the physician's advice or prescript[c]. To a patient demanding why the same medicine which had once done him much good did at the second time do him harm, Vindicianus, a learned physician in St. Augustine's time, answered, "Because at the first time, I gave it you; you took it the second time yourself, being of that age in which I would not have given it." Now as diversity of times, alteration of humours or constitution of men's bodies, may cause the selfsame medicine which at some times brought health, at another time to bring forth death or dangerous sickness to one and the selfsame body; so may kingdoms, whether for form or government the same or different, be speedily overthrown by following that method of reformation, or the selfsame rules of policy, by which most states formerly have been preserved. He that changeth times and seasons, disposeth the concurrents, or dissolveth the combination of occurrent circumstances or opportunities, must give his approbation or

[c] Magnus ille nostrorum temporum Medicus Vindicianus, consultus a quodam; dolori ejus adhiberi jussit, quod in tempore congruere videbatur: adhibitum sanitas consecuta est. Deinde, post annos aliquot eadem rursus corporis causa commotus, hoc idem ille putavit adhibendum: adhibitum vertit in pejus. Miratus, recurrit ad Medicum, indicat factum: at ille, ut erat acerrimus, ita respondit; Ideo male acceptus es, quia ego non jussi: ut omnes qui audissent, parumque hominem nossent, non eum arte medicinali fidere, sed nescio qua illicita potentia putarent. Unde, quum esset a quibusdam postea stupentibus interrogatus, aperuit quod non intellexerant, videlicet illi ætati jam non hoc se fuisse jussurum.—August. Epist. (5.) 138. tom. ii. 411. E. ad Marcellinum.

allowance before any contrivance of man can be effectual. He is the supreme Physician of men's souls, the Preserver of states and kingdoms. The greatest statesmen are at the best but his chirurgeons, or his apothecaries; and if they adventure upon any difficult cure without consulting him, the same hand which healed this year may wound the next, the same receipt which gave life to-day may kill to-morrow. From these collections Machiavel, so he would be constant unto himself, cannot vary.

12. The diversity of fortune, much furthering some
232 and crossing others [d], he derives from these originals: "As there be divers kinds of proceedings in managing the affairs of peace or war, with whose diversities the dispositions of men, by nature or custom much different, suit, some with one, some with another; so have different times their seasons and opportunities. Some times require quick dispatch, others delay of businesses; some businesses speedy execution, others maturity of consultation and long forecast." Now seeing no one man is fitted for all kinds of proceedings, nor no one kind of proceeding can befit all or most times, but all have their limits, which without error or danger they cannot transgress; hence it is that those men least err, and become most fortunate in their achievements, which have the hap to be employed in such times and seasons as best agree with their natural and accustomed manner of projecting. State-fortune then, by Machiavel's conclusion, is no bastard brood, no

[d] Dum sæpe multumque ipse mecum cogito de fortunæ diversitate quæ aliis secundam, aliis adversam se in eorum actionibus, institutisque exhibet: hanc ejus causam invenisse mihi videor, quod ut diversi sunt agendi modi, aliis atque aliis hominibus consueti ac naturales: ita aliæ atque aliæ sunt temporum rationes, occasionesque. Quidam in rebus gerendis, administrandisque ferocia quadam utuntur, et omnia cum impetu agunt, &c. Machiavel. lib. 3. cap. 9. in initio.

fatherless brat, but the true and legitimate offspring of time, fitly matched with the peculiar disposition of experienced practicks. On the contrary, public misfortune or ill success is the natural issue of men's endeavours when they are undertaken in an unfit time. The only question then remaining is, whether there be any, or if any, who is, the chief author of all fit matches or disagreements between the several dispositions of men and the opportunities of times? It is a point unquestionable, that the prime author of such matches is the first author of all success, be it good or bad, in human affairs. The greatest amongst the sons of men cannot command what opportunities they please, but must be content with such as time affords them; nor are the wisest of men always able to make choice of the best which time presents. Time likewise, though thus affording opportunities, cannot appoint the men that are most fit to entertain them. So that neither is time the fountain or author, nor can men be their own carvers of good success. Doth this office then belong to goddess Fortune? If she could see this, she might see all things, and were no longer to be reputed fortune; wisdom and providence should be her titles. It is that wisdom by which all things were made which disposeth their operations. It is that providence which was before all times that dispenseth the times and opportunities that are. These sit supreme scrutators in consultations of state, and have more casting voices than the world takes notice of. They secretly sway every election; other suffragants may freely declare their opinions and vent their breath, which these tune and moderate as they please.

13. That we may descend to Machiavel's instance; the Romans appointed no general without public consultation. Whether Fabius Maximus were chosen general

by unanimous consent of the senate, or with difficulty and contradiction, we have not observed, or do not remember. Even such as were most forward or factious for him, did little think how well his peculiar temper did suit with the opportunity of those times wherein he was appointed to cope with Hannibal. The common rumours which run of him throughout Rome argue a general dislike of his proceedings; if lingering might in their censures be called proceedings rather than cowardly delay or detrectation. The best proof he gave for a long time of his courage, was his constant contempt of others' censures. [e]But after the event did as far surpass their hopes of his slow proceedings as these had come short of their first expectations, their note was changed. Fabius was now
233 the only man[f], and (as some of them make him) more than a man; in common esteem[g] the only author of their city's preservation. Howbeit, to such as can resolve effects into their prime and native causes, children might more justly be fathered upon the woman that bears them, than this joyful issue which was brought forth by his lingering can be upon his forecast or wisdom. For this cunctation, of which the peculiar opportunities of these times begat good success, was to Fabius (as Machiavel well observes[h]) a

[e] Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem.

[f] Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem.—*Ennius.*

[g] Sed mens humana major; nec tela nec enses
Nec fortes spectabat equos. Tot millia contra
Pœnorum invictumque ducem, tot in agmina, solus
Ibat, et in sese cuncta arma virosque gerebat.
Silius Italicus, l. 7. v. 5.

[h] Neque Fabius sua cunctatione, ulla commodiori temporum occasione uti potuit, quam illa ipsa: cum tamen naturalis esset id Fabio illa cunctatio, non ex presenti temporum statu sumpta. Id enim vel eo ipso satis declaravit, quod cum Scipio in Africam postea ad conficiendum bellum trajicere vellet: Fabius ei vehementer resistebat, et omnibus modis impedire conabatur: ut qui natura sua magis ad cunctan-

disposition natural: he could not have changed with the times, nor fashioned himself to new occasions. He had held the same bias still, though on another much different ground: and so might he well have lost his late purchased fame, and Rome her prize, unless there had been more skill used in playing the game than the supposed Roman gamesters practised. As suppose Fabius had been sent to have bid Hannibal play in Africk, and Scipio appointed to keep the goal in Italy; Rome and Carthage, by the misplacing of these two men, might have changed fates and fortunes. Rome in all likelihood had been taken when Fabius saved it; and Carthage enriched with Roman spoils at the time when Scipio ransacked it. Rome could not have found a surer buckler to bear off Hannibal's blows in Italy than lingering Fabius, nor a fitter sword to beat him in his native soil than forward Scipio; and yet was Fabius the most forward man to oppose Scipio's expedition into Africk; and it may be some of Scipio's friends had bandied as earnestly against Fabius. Either of them liked his own course best; if haply either liked any other besides. Neither of them knew what temper was fittest for every season; nor is it possible for the wisdom of man to match these always aright, because albeit the temper or dispositions of

dum, arcendaque præsentia pericula ferretur, quam ad alia majora subeunda. Itaque per Fabium non stetit, quo minus Punicum bellum absolvi finirique non posset, quod is non animadverteret alia jam tempora esse, et aliam belli gerendi rationem commodam existere. Quod si solus rerum potitus fuisset, victoriam de Carthaginensibus obtinere nequivisset, quod belli gerendi rationes temporum diversitati nescivisset accommodare. Sed cum in ea republica tot essent insignes Imperatores, ac rei militaris peritissimi homines, voluit fortuna, ut sicuti difficilibus illis temporibus Fabius bellum sustinere, ac pericula arcere; ita postea, commodiori rerum statu, Scipio id conficere, et victoriam obtinere potuerit.—Machiavel. 3. cap. 9.

men did never alter, yet the occasions or opportunities of times are more changeable than the moon.

14. The aphorism which Machiavel gathers from the former discussions is not so false as imperfect; and it is this: Seeing different times require different manners of proceedings, and state agents cannot easily change their manner whereto they have been most accustomed; it were most expedient for states to change their agents, that their several dispositions might more exactly suit with the alterations of times and opportunities. The facility of observing or practising this rule in aristocracies is, in his judgment, one special cause why that kind of government is more durable than monarchical: for princes will hold their wonted ways, they will not change their resolutions, much less will they give place to others that are better fitted for entertaining the opportunities or change of times. Petrus Soderinus[1], a man for his moderation and wisdom fit to have governed an empire, did (as he thinks)
234 overthrow himself and the Florentine estate by continuing his authority, being unable to put off his wonted lenity and patience in times requiring austere imperious reformation: whereas pope Julius the Second played the lion all his time with the fox's luck; the more he was cursed for his impetuous insolency, the stronger he grew: no thanks to him or his wit, but to the times, which had they changed he must have fallen. But was not Septimius Afer, for his native severity, as well fitted to the impetuous dispo-

[1] Petrus Soderinus, cujus alias etiam mentionem fecimus, natura humanus erat, et patientia sua multas injurias ferebat, quæ res salutaris fuit reip. simul atque ipsi quamdiu tempora clementiora fuere. Sed cum temporum mutatione ferrea quædam ætas adesset, quæ severitatem postulabat: atque ille a consueta sua patientia et bonitate discedere nesciret, semetipsum simul, atque patriam perdidit.—Machiav. lib. 3. cap. 9.

sition of the Roman empire when he undertook it, as any medicine can be to the malady for which it is by art prepared? and yet his practice, though exactly answering to Machiavel's rules of reformation, (here and elsewhere set down,) found but the mountebank's success; he cured some present mischiefs, but procured more grievous, secret, and more permanent inconveniences; the barbarous nations, which longed most for Rome's destruction, learned the use and art of making the Romans' weapons and artillery, from the discontented exiles which his severity thrust upon them. Nor did Constantine the Great (though Leunclavius be willing to prefer the unsanctified Zozimus his bill against him, to Christian princes) half so much weaken the empire by his largess towards the Christians, as Septimius did wound it by seeking to restore, or rather to intend, the rigour of ancient discipline amongst modern dissolute Romans. Many like practices in the issue became means of the empire's more speedy dissolution; though all (as far as the eye of policy could see) most convenient for the present season; but it is not for politicians to know the exact temper of times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own power as cases reserved for infinite wisdom.

15. Had Rome, in the days of Arcadius and Honorius, stood at the same point of liking with God as she sometimes had done, these oversights (as it pleaseth posterity now to censure them) of Constantine and Septimius, with infinite other particulars of like nature falling out before and after them, should have added much to the measure of her wonted prosperity; but being now declined from God's favour to the aspect of his justice, all conspire against her, and her best supporters become stumblingblocks, to cause her to fall.

And although it had been possible for the several successions of her ancient and choicest senators to have been assembled together in council for her good, yet what possibility was there left to prevent the combination of second causes secretly conspiring her destruction, whenas the unavoidable mischances of nations, which they knew not, even the disasters of her enemies, became confederates with domestic miscarriages to work her mischief. If we consider only the visible causes, or means observable, by which this mighty empire came to miserable ruin, not all the oversights committed by any one, though the very worst, of all her governors or counsellors, not all the devices of any one nation or common enemy, did sow the seeds of so much evil and mishap as befell her from one example of severity, unseasonably practised by the [k]king of Goths upon a wicked woman that sought to cover her adultery by her abused husband's blood. The fact indeed deserved the height of princely indignation, and more than an ordinary death; but to pull her in pieces with horses (as Hermanarichus commanded) was so indignly taken by her brethren, that in revenge they killed this grave and ancient king, by whose wisdom and authority the Goths had been able so well to have matched the Huns, as the Romans might have stood as arbitrators to moderate the
235 quarrel as they saw fit, or to have divided the prey. But the Goths, being suddenly deprived of their governor in the very nick when the war was begun, left their habitation to the Huns, and (upon protestations of more than ordinary fidelity and good service) got to be admitted as natural subjects within the empire, which by this means became exposed to a double mischief. It hath the Huns as near, but more

[k] Bonfin. lib. 2. dec. 1.

insolent and noisome neighbours, than the Goths had been; and through the folly and greediness of the imperial officers, the Goth in short time, of a former open enemy, became a treacherous friend. The Romans nursed this young snake in their bosom, after such an unpleasant and untowardly fashion, as they might be sure he would be ready to use his sting when God should send him one. And albeit the Goth and Hun did naturally worse agree than the toad and spider; yet in relation to the execution of God's justice upon the Roman empire, they hold this exact subordination, that wheresoever the one had broken skin, the other was ready to infuse his poison; the one always ready to enlarge the wounds which the other had made, before they closed. Howbeit, when both these enemies had done the worst to Rome that they intended, (for both of them had power, in respect of any help that man could make, to do her as much harm as they listed,) yet the prophet's speech concerning Israel was remarkably true of her, *Perditio tua ex te O Roma*, Rome's destruction was from herself. Her very enemies would have healed her, but, Babylon-like, she would not be healed. Alaricus the Goth had taken the city, but made conscience of defacing it: he spared the supplicants for the temple's sake. Attilas was kindly entreated by pope Leo not to visit it; the rather thereto persuaded because God had visited Alaricus for polluting it. It was the cry of the noble Aëtius's blood treacherously shed, not by the enemy, but by the emperor Valentinian, at the instigation of Maximus, which did solicit Gensericus king of Vandals to come out of Africk to visit Rome, now sunk so low by Aëtius's fall, that she could never be raised again.

16. The concatenation of sinister fates, that is, (in

better language,) the combination of second causes designed by God for the execution of his consequent will upon the Roman empire, is in this case so pregnant, that I cannot make a fitter close of this discourse than by relating the historical circumstances, occasion, and consequence, of Aëtius's death. Maximus, a Roman senator, and principal favourite of Valentinian the emperor[1], sporting with him on a time in his palace, chanced to leave his ring behind; the emperor by this token invites Maximus's lady to come and visit his empress Eudoxia, his intention being to visit her in such a manner as was no way pleasing to her, but most displeasing to her husband, unto whom she disclosed their joint wrong and her special grief. The indignity of the fact (being done by so dear a friend as he supposed Valentinian was) made so deep impression in his heart, that an ordinary revenge could not suffice; the emperor's life seemed too small a recompense without hopes of succeeding him, and his hopes of succession (he saw) were but vain, if Aëtius should survive Valentinian. Maximus therefore, smoothly dissembling his discontent for the present, persuades the emperor that Aëtius was too potent in the opinion of the state, and become more popular than before, by the happy success of his late employment against Attilas, the common enemy and terror of Christen-
236 dom[m]. The emperor's weakness is easily wrought to put Aëtius to death, which, as one observes, was in effect to cut off his own right hand with his left, and to expose himself to public hatred and danger without a defendant. Thrasilas, a centurion to Aëtius, knowing his general's loyalty and innocency, in revenge of his undeserved death kills Valentinian; and Max-

[1] Vide Procop. lib. 3. de Bello Vandalico.
[m] Paulus Diaconus, lib. 15.

imus, not content to usurp the empire unless he might have the empress Eudoxia into the bargain, abuseth her as Valentinian had done his lady. Eudoxia, more impatient than Maximus's wife had been, solicits Gensericus, king of the Vandals, to revenge her husband's death and her wrongs. In the execution of God's will or wrath upon Maximus[n], the Romans prevent him, for they stone him to death; but could not prevent the ransacking of the city by him, and the final overthrow of the Roman empire. As for those imperial titles which some afterwards took upon them, these were but as ominous formalities, for the more legal resigning up of the Roman sovereignty into the hands of strangers, as Momillus, surnamed Augustulus, (the last of Italian blood which bare rule in Rome,) did it into the hands of the Huns, the relicks of Attilas's race, their inveterate enemies, whose rage and cruelty, when it was at the height of its strength, had been broken by Aëtius's valour. As the Roman rulers and senate had done to him, so hath the Lord now done to them.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Why God is called the Lord of Hosts, *or* the Lord mighty in Battle. *Of his special Providence in managing Wars.*

1. ALBEIT the sole authority of scripture, without the assignment of any reason, be a warrant all sufficient for us to enstyle our God *the Lord of hosts;* yet why he is so often in scripture thus enstyled, as by a most special and peculiar attribute, these reasons may without offence be given. His peculiar hand is not in any subject of human contemplation more

[n] Vide Bonfin. lib. 7. dec. 1. et Niceph. lib. 15. Hist. Eccles. cap. 11.

conspicuous than in the managing of wars. Why it should be more conspicuous in this than in other businesses, wherein men are much employed, the reason is plain; for contingencies are nowhere more ticklish than in war, nor is their number in any other subject so incomprehensible to the wit of man. It is hard to use wit and valour both at once; hard to spy an error upon the first commission of it; harder to redeem the time, or regain opportunities lost. It is a gross error which hath insinuated itself into some politicians' thoughts, if we may judge of their thoughts by their writings, that the chances which may fall out contrary to warriors' expectations are not so many but that they may be forecast or numbered. It is the politician's error likewise (though would to God it were his alone!) to think all occurrences, which are casual in respect of man, to be from the first occasions of war begun, so determined by him, which gives success in battle, as that victory must, in deed and truth, (though to men she seem not so,) incline to one party more than to the other. These casualties of war, or doubtful inclinations of victory, are in succession infinite; their possibilities, one way or other, may every moment increase from misdemeanours,
237 either of them which fight the battles, or of the parties for whom they fight: the fairest probability of good success may be abated from every good act or reformation of the adversary. God's eternal freedom, either in determining new occurrences, or altering the combinations of others already extant, cannot be prejudiced by any act past. He hath not so before all time decreed them, that he doth not still decree them at his pleasure, as well during all the time of war and fight as before. *Ita accidit sæpenumero*[o], *ut fortuna*

[o] Lazius.

ad utrumque victoriam transferat, quo bellum extrahatur, animosque nunc horum, nunc illorum accendat: "So it oftentimes falls out, that fortune makes fair proffer of victory to both sides, and one while encourageth this party, another while that, by which means wars are usually prolonged." Now whatsoever in these cases befalls men, either beyond their expectation or contrary to their forecast, is counted fortunate, if it be for their good, or fatal, if it be for their harm. Hence men, not only of most accurate book learning amongst the Romans, but of best experience in matters of war, have given more to fortune than bystanders or historical relaters usually acknowledge to be her due.

Had Cæsar, upon a diligent and accurate survey of the means by which he got his victories, allotted fortune her just part in several, or told us truly how much fell out beyond or above his expectation, how much just according to his reckoning; the world (I think) would have been of the same mind with Machiavel, in his forementioned [p] contemplations of Rome's surprisal by the Gauls, which was, that the most victorious do not deserve much glory either for wit or valour, nor the conquered much dispraise for the contrary imperfections, seeing fate or fortune has always the chiefest stroke, as well in the exaltation of the one, as in the dejection of the other. Notwithstanding, it is no part of mine, whatsoever it was of Machiavel's meaning, to have any man deprived of that commendation which is due to him in respect of other men; and it is not the least title unto true praise, to be in favour with the supreme Disposer of martial success. In respect of him, the victorious have no cause to boast, but rather to condemn their sloth and negligence, in that the fruit of their success was no better than usually it

[p] Chap. 27. sect. 7.

proves, they having so good assistance, and sure pledges of Divine favour.

2. Wheresoever Cicero, Cæsar, Vegetius, or other heathens could suspect or descry the secret assistance of fate or fortune, specially in matters more remarkable, as are the usual consequents of war; there we may without solecism say the finger of the Lord of hosts did work. For if the least wound that is given or taken in fight do not make itself, but is made by the vigilant and working hand of man, shall not the chief stroke or sway of battle, which usually falls without warriors' comprehension, lead us to a direct, a certain and positive cause? Now if this cause were otherways unknown, by what name could we more properly call it, than by the Lord of hosts, or great Moderator of war.

If we may guess at God's working in all, by the manifestation of his special hand in some; I am persuaded there was never any great battle fought since the world began, much less any famous war accomplished with such facility or speed, but that if it had pleased the historians to express all circumstances of special moments, or could the reader survey such as they express with as diligent and curious eyes, as one artificer will another's work; the consultations of their
238 chief managers, and the executions which seem to have most dependance on them, would bear no better proportion with their entire success, than the day-labourer's work doth with a curious edifice, or than the pioneer's pains doth with the defence or expugnation of strong forts or castles: and yet even in the maturest deliberations or most exact consultations of war, related by ordinary historians, the final determination may for the most part be resolved into some special Divine instinct: the execution of that which men by

such instinct determine and resolve upon, essentially depends upon the disposition of God's peculiar providence, who hath an authentic negative in the use of every means which men make choice of, albeit in using them he admit men as his coworkers, but not as sharers in production of the principal effect or end. He alone bestoweth victory where he pleaseth, by what means or whose agency he pleaseth; but not always with victory success, unless such as be his agents or instruments in the execution of his consequent will upon others be ready to do his antecedent will or pleasure themselves.

3. This is a subject whose fuller explication would require a larger volume than this whole treatise in my intendment shall be. I will therefore instance especially in one battle and another war of the greatest consequences that the histories of these three hundred years past present unto us. The first shall be in that fierce and violent conflict at Grunwald, between Jagello, or Vladislaus, king of Poland and Lithuania, and the Crucigeri, or knights of Prussia, about the year one thousand four hundred. Should a politician or soldier, that will believe no more than he sees grounds for out of his own art, have seen the mighty preparation and courageous resolution of both parties, he would haply have demanded a sign of God's providence, and said in his heart, 'Let us see either of these two armies take flight upon a conceited noise of chariots or horsemen, or an imagination of an army not really existent: or what Gideon is he now alive, that dare adventure on the weaker of them, with three hundred men, although he had thrice three hundred trumpeters to encourage them?' We will not therefore press any with belief of miracles in these latter times, but rather persuade them with us to acknowledge that those ex-

traordinary manifestations of power more than natural in battles fought for Israel and Judah by Gideon or Samson, by the angels, by the host of heaven, or by inferior elements, were not more pregnant documents of God's immediate hand in managing wars, nor better proofs of his just title to be the Lord of hosts, than the contrivances of ordinary causes and occurrences in martial affairs of moderate times, doth or might afford to all such as rightly survey them. To make a mighty army fall by the free and unimpeached exercise of their own valour and strength, can be no less wonderful to unpartial eyes, than to scatter them by fire and lightning, than to beat them down by mighty hailstones from heaven; to cause the stronger and more skilful in war to faint, without diminishing of their courage and strength, is no less the Lord's doing, than if their hearts had been surprised with a panic terror, or their arms suddenly deprived of life and motion, as Jeroboam's was. Yet this was the case of the Prussian knights of the cross, and the German forces which assisted them against Jagello.

4. The conduct of the right wing of Jagello's army, which did consist of Lithuanians, was commended to his brother Vitoudus, not out of any foresight of advan-
239 tage, but in honour of his person, or of that nation; which was perhaps an oversight in point of war. However, this wing was fiercely assaulted by the opposite wing of the German army, which was a great deal the stronger, especially for horsemen. God by his secret[o] providence did so dispose that this advantage should redound unto their greater overthrow; for the Lithuanians, being the far weaker part of Jagello's army, both for want of skill and of armour, after a furious encounter, fled the faster; and the German

[o] Vide Varsevicii paral. in vita Jagell.

wing which had put them to flight, not suspecting but that their other wing had been as able to match the Polonian as they had been to defeat the Lithuanian, pursued the victory so long and so far, that they were neither able fully to succour the other wing, being scattered and broken by the Polonians before their return, nor to fly from their enemies with that speed they desired, as being overwearied with the former chase. Of the Germans, by this oversight and presumption, fifty thousand were slain, and (as some relate) almost as many taken prisoners. They had put their confidence in the valour, skill, and multitude of their army, which did consist of an hundred and forty thousand choice soldiers. The good king Jagello's trust was in his prayers to God, and in the presumption of his enemy, which had been so triumphant before the victory, so certain of victory before the joining of the battle, that they would not give Jagello leave to say his prayers, or do his wonted service unto God, but sent him two swords in mockery, one for himself, and another for his brother Vitoudus, as if they had wanted weapons to defend themselves; proffering him withal, that if the place wherein he then was were too strait for ordering his men, they would go back, as in contempt and scorn they did, and make him room. This insolent message was by the religious king embraced as a welcome prognostick that they should give him place against their wills. And so it fell out, that they were not able to defend themselves within their trenches; their tents and carriages became a prey to the Polonians, being so well fraught with all manner of provision, not for necessity only, but for pleasure, that Jagello caused a great number of winevessels to be burst in pieces, lest his soldiers should be overcome with plenty of wine, after they

had overcome their potent enemies, or at least be hindered from further pursuit of victory. There a man might have seen a strange spectacle, a flood or stream, not of blood or wine, but as if it had been of gore, by the mixture of the wine and the blood alike violently shed in the German camp: the gaudiness of their armour would not suffer such as escaped by flight to lie hid in the fens or reeds into which they ran. This was the issue of their unhallowed confidence, which had in their tents abundance of torches and of chains; the one provided for leading the nobles of Poland captive, the other for firing their cities.

5. There is a story mentioned by Salvianus exactly paralleled to the former, for the different dispositions of the parties conflictant, and for the contrary success which befell their contrary demeanours before the battle. The conflict was betwixt the Goths and the Gauls. The Goths were a kind of Christians, but Arians, through default of their instructors. The Gauls were catholics, as good as Rome had any in those days; so were the Prussian knights; Jagello was a late convert Christian, and very devout in his kind, yet not quite purged from some heathenish inbred superstition. It was a custom with him to turn thrice round about, and to break a straw in three pieces, before he went abroad. How much more acceptable, or less displeasing unto God, how much more available in the day of battle, unfeigned humility, fear and devotion, (though in part tainted with erroneous opinion and superstition,) are, than confidence in the purity of opinions, or profession of orthodoxal religion, without correspondency of practice, cannot better be expressed than it is by Salvianus [p]: "That saying of

[p] Non ita Gothi, non ita Vandali, qui et in discrimine positi opem a Deo postulant, et prosperitatis suæ munus divinis

our Saviour, *He that exalts himself shall be brought low*, was evidently experienced in the Goths and in us: they humbled themselves, and were exalted; we exalted ourselves, and were dejected. This our general found true in himself, being led captive into that city of the enemies into which he presumed he should the same day have entered as conqueror. Herein the judgment of God was apparent upon him, that he should suffer, whatsoever he had presumed or undertaken to do. The king of the Goths," as he concludes, "fought with prayers and supplications before he came to fight with the arm of flesh; and he therefore went out with confidence unto battle, as having obtained victory in his prayer."

A second parallel to the former battle, for the alteruant inclinations of victory, or sudden turning of woful and sad beginnings unto joyful issue, might be taken from that famous battle of Flodden, if we may believe either the ordinary Scottish history, or the constant report of the English which were then alive, and took the relation from the mouths of such as were employed in that service, being men of note, and no way partial. In their observation, it was the extra-

nominibus appellant. Denique probavit hoc bello proximo infelicitas nostra. Cum enim Gothi metuerunt, præsumpsimus nos: nos in viribus spem ponere, illi in Deo: cum pax ab illis postularetur, a nobis negaretur: illi episcopos mitterent, nos repellere remus: illi etiam in alienis sacerdotibus Deum honorarent, nos etiam in nostris contemneremus: prout actus utriusque partis, ita et rerum terminus fuit. Illis data est in summo timore palma, nobis in summa elatione confusio. Vere et in nobis tunc et in illis evidenter probatum fuit illud Domini nostri dictum, *Quoniam, qui se exaltat, humiliabitur, et qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.* Illis enim exaltatio data est pro humilitate, nobis pro elatione dejectio. Namque agnovit hoc ille dux nostræ partis, qui eandem urbem hostium, quam eodem die victorem se intraturum esse præsumpsit, captivus intravit &c. In quo quidem præter ipsam rerum infelicitatem, præsens judicium Dei patuit, ut quicquid facturum se usurparat, ipse pateretur, &c. —Salvian. lib. 7. p. 160.

ordinary valour of the Scottish vanguard, in the very first onset or joining of battle, which brought victory (otherwise doubtful, or declining from them) to the English. For the sudden discomfiture and confused flight of the English vanguard unto the main battle, made that unfortunate king believe that the English army began to reel; and out of this mistake, as one that had prepared himself to follow the chase, rather than to order his own battle, he was encompassed by the English in that very place (as some report) which he had been forewarned, but in terms general and ambiguous, to eschew.

6. That great war between Charles the Fifth and the confederate princes of Germany, begun in the year 1546, was more lingering; for, as the judicious historian[q] observes, we shall hardly find any record in antiquity of two such great armies lying so near one to the other so long as these two armies did without a full battle. The war was managed as if it had been a game at chess, wherein divers oversights were committed on both sides; and yet the disadvantage given or taken still so recoverable, that the old maxim, *Non licet bis peccare in bello*, may seem by the event of this war to be restrained to *prælium*, rather to a set battle than to war. Charles the emperor did in the esteem of warriors manage his businesses more cautelously than the confederates did; and yet, if we should speak in the ordinary politician or soldier's language, was more beholding to fortune, than to prudence, or counsel
241 of war. It was a great oversight to expose himself unto such imminent danger as he did at Gengen[r], out of a desire to view his enemies' army. For (as the Spaniards confess) if the confederate princes had been as vigilant to take advantage, as he was careless to

[q] Thuanus, anno 1546.

[r] Thuanus, ibid.

give it, they might have put an end to this war, as soon as it was begun. It is noted likewise as a great oversight in them, that they did not assault him whilst he was encamped about Ingoldstadt and Ratisbon, expecting fresh supplies out of Italy and the Low Countries: yet the loss of this opportunity they had easily redeemed not long after, had not their project been disclosed to Charles, who removed his camp before they had notice, and, by favour of the great winds which that night happened, surprised Donawert, a place of good importance for his present designs: that count Egmond with his Netherland forces, on whose skill and valour Charles did most rely, should escape the surprisal intended by the landgrave, was more from good hap and Cæsar Magius's extemporary sophism, than from any forecast either of the emperor himself or of count Egmond. For unless his soldiers had been persuaded that the landgrave was nearer to them overnight than indeed he was, he had been nearer to them, or sooner upon them in the morning, than they could have wished. But this false alarm given by Magius made them willing, though much wearied, to march all night. Not long after their safe conduct unto the main camp, the chief counsellors of war were instant with Charles to dissolve his army for that winter until the next spring; that his resolution to the contrary proved so successful, was more than in human wisdom could be forecast, so long as the success of Maurice duke of Saxony, and the Bohemians which had invaded the territories of John duke of Saxony, was uncertain. But the prevailing power of this unexpected enemy, being a known professor of that religion for whose maintenance his noble uncle and father-in-law had taken arms, enforced the confederates to divide their army, which could not but

give advantage to Charles. But that Henry the Eighth of England and Francis the First of France (neither of them likely to have stood as bystanders in this great business, if they had lived) should both die in this interim, this was the Lord's doing, not fortune's; Charles could not ground any resolution upon the hope of it, nor could the confederate princes foresee the disadvantage which from their death did redound unto them. Yet, after all these prejudices on the confederate princes' behalf, Charles's expedition into Saxony against John prince elector, who had retired thither with part of the army to prevent Maurice's further proceedings, was very doubtful, and full of danger; and yet was Charles (who before had shewed himself to be more timorous and backward) more resolute and forward in this expedition, than any of his captains or commanders.

7. Doubtless, lest his captains, his soldiers, or council of war, should boast as if their own right hands, their policy and strength, had gotten the victory, the Lord of hosts, the Lord mighty in battle, did so dispose that the emperor one while should fear where no fear was, and another while be courageously wilful or resolute, against his grave council of war, and against all probability of hopeful success. At Nordling, when his army was full, and his soldiers fresh, when the Spaniards (after some difficult passages had been conquered by their undaunted resolution) were persuaded
242 that victory was hard before them, Charles would not give them leave to overtake it, or (as if it had been snatched out of their jaws) they did gnash with their teeth for very indignation; nor was this hope of victory in the Spaniards conceived from intemperate heat of war, or longing desire to fight without good grounds of reason. For Maximilian Egmond, a wise

and well experienced commander, was so taken with the same persuasion, that when the emperor called him back, he pulled his helmet off his head, and for anger and indignation threw it with violence against the ground. Had Egmond followed his advantage, and presently overcome his enemies, this might have been attributed to Scipio's valour in him; or if Charles himself had continually sought to drive away danger by delay, he might have been reputed another Fabius: but this temper changed with the time, *Versa tabula currebat, qui modo stabat, et stabant qui modo currebant:* they drew back, which formerly could hardly be recalled from fighting, and he which recalled them draws them forwards against their wills. For coming near to Mulberg[t], where John prince elector of Saxony was taken, albeit the duke of Alva, (one at that time as notoriously known for his resolution as for his cruelty afterwards,) and the rest of the council of war, did utterly mislike his intended passage over the river of Elbe that day, as an attempt too adventurous and desperate, which might yield great advantage to his enemy; no persuasion could move or weaken his resolution; but fight he would upon that very day upon what terms soever. And it afterwards appeared, that unless he had put this his unseasonable desire of battle (as to them it seemed) in present execution, he might long have waited before he had laid hold on the like opportunity again. For some few hours' start might either have secured the duke of Saxony from a necessity of battle, or assured him of victory, if he had been enforced to fight. The next morning after his overthrow the emperor met with new supplies, which had received the duke in a well-fenced place, whereas it was Cæsar's good fortune to take the duke the day before,

[t] Thuanus, anno 1547.

beyond all expectation, in such a place as he could not fight upon equal terms, nor make from him but by a disgraceful flight.

8. Alva, out of his experience and skill, might foresee much hazard and danger in his master's adventurous resolution to pass over an unknown river in such haste; and his master, out of some humour or restless instinct, might be pushed forwards to fight that day without apprehension of any just reason why: but who, besides Him alone which appointeth the occurrences and opportunities of time, could foresee or forecast that the duke of Alva, being sent on a sudden to seek a guide, should forthwith light on a man from whom some of the duke of Saxony's followers (a few days before) had taken two colts, and made him ready and willing, in hope of revenge or recovery of his loss, to discover an unknown passage of that uncouth river. They had reason to enstyle him as they did, *Dux viæ:* for he stood the emperor in more stead than any ten captains in his army, he being resolved to try the fortune of battle that day. Thus the Lord of hosts, as skilful as mighty in battle, can turn and wind the whole fabric of war with the least finger of his hand, and overthrow or establish the cunningest projects of greatest princes, and their councils of war, by the experience and information of a silly country swain. Captains may consult, but he determines; they throw the dice, he appoints the chance; they may set their men
243 as it pleaseth them, but he in the issue will play the game as it pleaseth him. When we see great statesmen or subtle politicians more grossly infatuated in some particulars of greatest consequence than ordinary men usually are, this is a sure token that the wisdom which they formerly used was not their own; but when we see them wittingly cunning to work their

own overthrow, this is an argument that there is one wiser than they, which sometimes gives wisdom, sometimes only lends it, so as he will require satisfaction for the misemployment of it. And it is not so great a wonder to see a wise man infatuated, or utterly deprived of wisdom, as to see his wit and skill continually employed in weaving a net to ensnare himself in, and such as rely upon his projects and power.

9. Hitherto Charles the Fifth had the fortune of good dice, and played the foregame exceeding well. But seeing religion lay at the stake, God instructs others to play the aftergame a great deal better against him; albeit he had two great counsellors, the one for matters of state, the other for war, to wit, the duke of Alva and Granvel the chancellor, as bystanders to help him. The sum of their advice was, to account severity the best fruits of victory, and to keep them under by strong hand whom he had conquered, and to bring them in by cunning which had yet some opportunity to stand out against him. His first oversight was in committing the ever-renowned duke of Saxony to the custody of a Spaniard, to Alfonsus Vives, brother to the famous Ludovicus. This bred great alienation of affection and discontent in some nobles of Germany, of whose fidelity and good service in this war he had proof sufficient. But more mightily overseen he was in the cunning draught of those articles upon which the landgrave of Hesse did yield himself, not as a prisoner, but as a reconciled friend or subject, as he presumed. The emperor and his council had wit enough to take this man prisoner, but not to foresee the blot which would hereupon follow, not to the staining only of the emperor's honour, but to the hazard of the main game, and utter loss of his late conquest. They did not consider that Maurice of Saxony, son-in-law to

the landgrave, was as subtle as valorous, and being as ambitious as subtle, would meditate as full a requital of this real disgrace and delusion, (he being interessed in the reconcilement,) as he had done of a friendly but sharp check, given by his uncle and guardian, (the now captive duke of Saxony,) for being too prodigal of his patrimony in his nonage. But Maurice's disposition and abilities were happily unknown unto the emperor: and it was not usual for a forward young captain, not above twenty-six years of age, to be of as deep a reach in matters of state as his greyheaded and most experienced counsellors. The more patient he was for the present, the more deeply he laid his plot, the more vigilant he was to entertain all opportunities which should be offered for the redemption of his father-in-law and the liberty of his country. The making of Maurice prince elector in his captive uncle's stead did add much to his power: the Spaniards' security and insolency, expressed in their printed books, of the conquest in Germany, as of some meaner province, or appendix to their affected monarchy, did much exasperate the German princes especially, all but of Brandenburg, hitherto a faithful adherent unto Charles the Fifth, and a trusty friend and companion unto Maurice, to whom he was now more nearly linked by the sure tie of common discontent. The first opportunity which
244 Maurice had for effecting his long concealed plot, was the manifestation of Charles's purpose for reducing the Romish religion into the free states and cities of Germany (which had abandoned it), contrary to his former promises, when he solicited their aid against the duke of Saxony and landgrave of Hesse, not as the chief maintainers or patrons of reformed religion, but as rebels against his imperial majesty. This unexpected purpose of Charles was most clearly bewrayed

in the siege of Magdeburg, against which city no occasion of hostility could be pretended, besides her citizens' resolution to maintain that religion which by public authority had been established. The whole body of Germany besides was in a manner so drowned and choked, that liberty (especially in points of religion) could scantly draw breath, save only through Flaccus Illyricus's pen. For subduing this city, which for a while had held out stoutly against others set to besiege it, Maurice of Saxony was adjudged the fittest man, who, being employed in this service, gains opportunity by protraction of the war to make leagues as well with the French king as with some princes and states of Germany: but after many suspicions and jealousies taken against him, so cunningly goes on with his project, that he came upon Charles the emperor on such a sudden manner at Inchborrough, as made him and his courtiers, with the foreign ambassadors there attending, to leave the supper, which had been provided for them, unto Maurice and his company. There was a horse-litter and torches provided for the emperor himself, with some few attendants, but such scarcity of horses for the rest, that a man might have seen that common resemblance of princes, of nobles, and common people, to a company of chessmen promiscuously put into a common bag when the game is ended, really acted in a confused flight of this great emperor's amazed court. Dukes, earls, and lords, great commanders in war, common soldiers and kitchenboys, were glad to trudge it on foot in the mire hand in hand; a duke or earl not disdaining to support or help up one of the blackguard ready to fall, lest he himself might fall into the mire, and have none to help him. This was the issue of the greatest war which Germany had seen or known since the days of Charles

the Great; in the managing and prosecution whereof more excellent commanders were employed by Charles the Fifth, than any prince in Christendom since hath had to employ.

10. Unto many is given power and wit sufficient for compassing the conquest of their potent enemies, unto whom the wisdom of using the victory aright (which they oftentimes purchased at too dear a rate) is denied. The same Lord of hosts which put his hook into Sennacherib's nostrils, and thereby dragged this furious monster, which had ranged far and near to devour others, into his own land, there to fall by his own bowels in the house of his false gods, had all this while led Charles the Fifth (a prince of more calm and moderate spirit) as it were in a silken string, yet strong enough to bring this roving projector back again within the Rhine, where he is now to encounter with the French. And being thus overwearied in the German war, the duke of Guise at the siege of Metz beats his soldiers out of heart and breath, and makes Charles himself thus to pant: *Jam me desertum et circa me nullos viros video;* "Now I see I am a man forsaken, and have no men about me." Few there were besides himself that were willing to have the siege continued any longer; and one of his common soldiers, out of the bitterness of his discontented soul and diseased body, calls him the son of a mad woman to his face for continuing it so long. But whether his undertaking or prosecuting this siege did relish more of his mother's disposition than of his own, let warriors judge: he never shewed more wisdom in any enterprise before than he did in this—that he sought not from this time to woo his wonted fortunes by wrestling with fates. But after he perceived the Lord of hosts did not go out with his armies, as before he had done,

he willingly puts off his imperial robes with his armour, and betakes himself to a private retired life. How much happier in this resolution than either the Davus or Diabolus Germaniæ, than the often mentioned Maurice of Saxony, surnamed the Victorious, or the turbulent Albert of Brandenburg, which had brought him into these straits! As these two princes, in all their undertakings, in their secret confederacies, whether for Charles the Fifth or against him, had aimed more at their private ends than at the public weal of Germany; so it pleased the Lord of hosts (after he had by their joint forces so turned the scales of the German war, as is before set down) to settle the public peace by their fatal discord. So I term it, partly because they had been so dear friends, partly[u] because a reconciliation betwixt them was so earnestly sought by many, and would have been readily embraced by Maurice, had not Albert, more out of the strength of wine than either of wit or courage, provoked him to battle by a most gross and most unseasonable challenge. Maurice had given good tokens of his inclination to peace, and the like was expected from Albert. But the messenger[x] being dispatched after dinner, when Bacchus was more predominant with Albert than either Minerva or Mars, instead of a pledge of peace, he sent his colours to Maurice, and so, after they had eaten and drunk, they rose up to play, after such a manner as Abner's young men and Joab's did,

[u] Inter Mauricium et Albertum, cum essent æquales, maxima semper fuerat necessitudo, sic ut nihil esset illis conjunctius. Tribus enim bellis ambo simul Cæsari militarunt, Gallico, Smalcaldico, Magdeburgico; deinde, quartum atque postremum hoc in Cæsarem susceperunt: sed natis offensionibus, hunc tam funestum habuit exitum ipsorum amicitia.—Sleidanus Comment. lib. 25. anno 1553. pag. 740. See the occasions of their outfall, lib. 24. anno 1552.

[x] Vide Thuanum, anno 1553.

2 Sam. ii. 14, 15. The manner of their mutual assault was more like a butchery than a sober war. Albert in this furious conflict was so foiled, that he never recovered root or branch again, but after some few attempts lived as a perpetual exile or vagabond; his memory being as hateful to his country in his absence, as his presence had been terrible whilst he was able to gather forces. And Maurice[y], who deservedly enjoyed the title of Victorious, did take up victory upon exchange of life, having so much use of sense and memory as to have his enemy's colours presented to his eyes, now ready to be closed up in perpetual darkness. This was the end of this victorious prince, which had outstript the greatest statesmen of those times in maturity of wit and deepness of judgment, in matters martial or civil, before his body had come to its full growth, insomuch that policy (whom Cæsars in their greatness are ofttimes forced to serve) did seem to attend on him, enabling him to achieve those projects with an heroical careless resolution and majestic grace, for the purchase of which many powerful monarchs have been often drawn to use untowardly shifts and sly collusions, odious and contemptible to their inferiors. He was the only man of this age (as one writes of him) that had the skill to take occasion (when it offered itself) by the very point, and to carve opportunities out of perplexities; yet, for all this, had no skill or forecast to prevent, no fence to put by the sudden stroke of death, which set a short period to his

y Signa militaria sunt hostibus erepta, et ad ipsum ex prælio relata: pedestria quidem quinquaginta quatuor, equestria vero quatuordecim. Mauricius ergo, vitam quidem ipse profudit, sed Alberti tamen vires atque robur admodum fregit: nam ab eo prælio vix unquam ille potuit vel mediocres recolligere copias.—Sleidanus Comment. lib. 25. anno 1553. pag. 740. Vide plura Thuanum.

far reaching plots, and dashed the masterpiece of his projects when it was come to the very height, and ready to fall upon the mark it aimed at. The Spaniards have more cause to bless the day of this prince's 246
death, than the day of their victory over the duke of Saxony his uncle; for if he had lived but a little longer, the wings of Austria and Spain had, in all probability, been cut a great deal shorter throughout Germany and the Low Countries than since they have been, by the confederacy which the French king and he had made lately for ruinating Charles the Fifth. But whatsoever devices were in their hearts, the counsel of the Lord was against them; and that must stand, though by the sudden fall of the confederates.

11. To reflect a little upon the more special interpositions of God's providence in moderating the proceedings and issues of this war. The Romanists have small cause to brag (though many of them do so) of Charles's victory over the two confederate princes, as of some special token of God's favour to their church and religion. Chytreus[y], a most unpartial writer, and well acquainted with the state of Germany as then it stood, and with the several dispositions of the chief confederates, ingenuously confesseth, as a special argument of God's favour towards the professors of the reformed religion throughout Germany, that the duke of Saxony and landgrave of Hesse had not the victory which they expected over the emperor. He might have more reason thus to write than I know or now remember; but certainly their agreement during the time of the war was not altogether so good as to promise any lasting concord, or sure establishment of true Christian peace, throughout the several provinces of Germany, if they had prevailed. Shertelius, who commanded in

[y] In the Life of Charles the Fifth.

chief for the free cities, did (as some write) forsake the camp, as being weary of their wranglings. However, their few years' captivity was a fatherly chastisement, no plague, or token of God's wrath against them. As the unjust detention of the landgrave brought greater dishonour to the emperor Charles than any one act that he ever did, so the duke of Saxony won himself more honour by his durance than the emperor could bestow upon him. Victory in battle, abundance of wealth, and titles of honour, are gifts and blessings from the Lord, yet of which pagans and infidels are capable, and such as many heathens have scorned, or not affected. But for a prince by birth, which had been continually borne upon the wings of better fortune, always reputed the chief stay and pillar of his country, to endure captivity in an uncouth court with such constancy of mind, as could turn the intended contempt and scorn of his witty enemies into kindness and admiration, and cause such as had led him captive, not only to pity, but to honour him, and propagate his fame unto posterity—this was a blessing peculiar to God's saints. That character which foreign writers have put upon him will hardly befit any that is not a Christian inwardly and in heart: *Neque in prosperis elatum, neque in adversis dejectum, sui hostes unquam videre:* "His enemies did never see him either puffed up with prosperity or dejected with adversity." But was it not the greater pity, (if we may speak after the manner of most men, and as many Germans in those times did,) that so noble a prince should be punished with the perpetual loss of his electoral dignity? yet even this (that we may with veneration rather admire than question the secret ways of God's providence) was no loss, but gain unto God's church, and the public weal of Saxony, which he more sought than

his own ends or commodities; for by his falling into Charles's hands, the electoral dignity of Saxony 247
fell into another collateral line, which proved as beneficial and favourable to good learning and reformed religion, as any other princely family of Germany in those times. Witness (to omit their other good deeds in this kind) that princely munificence of duke Augustus, (brother and heir to Maurice the victorious,) annually exhibited to ministers' orphans, related by Polycarpus Lyserus[z]. How well those good examples, which Maurice himself and his brother Augustus had set, have been followed by their successors, falls not within my reading or observation; but surely these two advancers of this second line did better imitate the princely virtues of their deprived uncle than his own sons were likely to have done: for the judicious unpartial French historian assigns this as one special reason why the fame and memory of John duke of Saxony did not continue so fresh and precious after his death as he deserved, *quia reliquit filios sui dissimillimos.*

CHAP. XXIX.

Of God's special Providence in making unexpected Peace, and raising unexpected War.

1. THE hand of the Almighty is not more conspicuous in managing wars begun by men, than his finger is in contriving their first beginnings. Love is his nature; and friendship, or mutual love, betwixt man and man, princes or nations, is a blessing which de-

[z] In his preface or epistle dedicatory to the continuation of Chemnitius's Harmony. Of Maurice's munificence and good affection towards learning and religion, see Sleidan. lib. 19. an. 1547.

scends from him alone, who is the only author of all true peace, but not the author only of peace. Sometimes he kindles unquenchable dissensions where the seeds of secular peace have been sown with greatest policy, and watered with continual care and circumspection; sometimes, again, he maketh sudden unexpected concord between spirits that jar by nature, and joins the right hand of inveterate foes, to strengthen the stroke of justice upon his enemies.

2. Later chronicles will hardly afford any example of worse consort between neighbour princes than was between Charles of Burgundy and Lewis of France; whether we respect the contrariety of their natural dispositions, or the incompossibility of their projects or engagements. Nature had planted, and policy had nourished, a kind of antipathy betwixt them; and yet how quickly and unexpectedly did these two great princes (after irreconcilable variances) close, and agree together, to crush the wise, the rich, and martial earl of Saint Paul, then high constable of France! He that had been of both these princes' courts, and of both their counsels, hath left it observed, that they could never be brought in all their lifetime to concur in any other action or project besides this; albeit they had often greater motives to entertain peace between themselves than provocations to conspire against this earl. Perhaps his experience of their ill consort made him more confident than otherwise he would have been; though confident he might have been upon better grounds than most great subjects or inferior princes can be, if wit, if wealth, if policy, if martial power or authority, could secure any from the execution of God's justice.

3. The best use which Machiavel or his scholars
248 make of this potentate's mishap, is to forewarn great

subjects or inferior princes not to interpose as arbitrators or umpires upon advantage when their betters fall at variance. The advice, I confess, is very good; and ignorance hereof, or want of like consideration, (it may be,) was some part of this great earl's folly, not his principal fault; some occasion, no true or prime cause, of these two great princes' combination against him. For besides Lewis and Charles[a], Cominæus, a man no way inferior to Machiavel in politic wit, had espied a third principal actor in this tragedy, whose first appearance was (to his apprehension) in the likeness of lady Fortune, but was discovered, upon better review, to be Divine Providence. This good author's comment upon this accident is so full and lively, as it will not admit any paraphrase of mine without wrong, not only to him but to the reader. Only of one clause, pertinent as well to the discourse following, as to that or the like passage of sacred writ, *As every man*

[a] Quid v. hoc loco dicas de fortuna, mundi gubernatrice? ut nonnulli putant. Obtinebat ille summam in Galliis authoritatem: finitimus erat utrique principi; arcem habebat munitissimam, et rebus omnibus instructam. Præfecerat eum rex quadringentis cataphractis: valebat ingenio; et peritia rei bellicæ præstabat; magnum habebat rerum usum, et auri vim ingentem possidebat. Statuendum est igitur fortunam, qua nihil est mutabilius, ei fuisse planeadversariam. Sed revera nihil aliud est fortuna, quam figmentum poeticum. Quin potius ita judicandum est, iratum ei fuisse Deum et graviter offensum. Et si de consiliis arcanis fas esset ulli homini pronunciare, dicerem illum excitasse iram Dei adversum se, hac una re potissimum quod per omnem vitam, mente et animo totus in hoc fuerat ut perpetuum bellum aleret. Nam in eo positam esse putabat suæ dignitatis materiam, ac veluti segetem. Neque vero difficile ei erat istud perficere. Tota enim natura et moribus et ingenio principes inter se dissidebant. Vix igitur credendum est fortunam aliquam eo dementiæ adduxisse virum longe prudentissimum, ut eos principes adversum se concitaret, quorum fuerat per omnem vitam in rebus omnibus contraria, et diversa voluntas: qui nullam rem unquam simul ex animo comprobarunt nisi hanc in illius caput factam conjurationem.--Cominæus Commentar. lib. 6. juxta finem, pag. 374.

sows, so shall he reap, I must give the reader special notice. This earl was always delighted to sow the seeds of war, war being (as he and the world thought) the chief field, or surest ground of his glory; and he ends his thus honoured life with a bloody and unglorious death: this was, by God's appointment, the most natural crop and proper harvest of such a seed-time as he had made. Yet was not the finger of God more remarkable in knitting these two princes, which all their lifetimes had stood (as we say) at the staff's end, than in loosing the strict link of mutual amity between other ancient friends and sworn confederates; albeit the politician seek in this case, as in the former, altogether to cover or obliterate all impression of it. For it is his manner or humour, as was observed before, to bring as much grist as he can, and more than he ought, to his own mill; to entitle such partial and subordinate means as fall within the compass of his profession, sole or prime causes of those effects which are immediately produced by Divine Providence.

4. He spake merrily that said, "A man could not bestow his alms worse than on blind men, seeing they could find in their hearts to see their best benefactors hanged." But it hath been delivered in good earnest as a cautelous rule by some politic discoursers, that the most thankless office any great personage can do to his dearest friend were to make him king. It is a lesson of every day's teaching, "the greater men grow, the more they scorn to be thought to be beholden unto others." The very sight of such as they have been more beholden unto than they can handsomely requite, seems to upbraid ambitious minds. He is a mean historian that cannot instance in divers upstart princes, which could not long suffer the heads of those men whose hands had put crowns on theirs,

unto which they had no lawful title, to stand where nature had given them lawful possession, i. e. upon their own shoulders. Politic rules or aphorisms, grounded upon historical observations of this kind, are not altogether without use; but the doctrine inveiled in poetical fictions is, in this and many other cases, 249
more catholic than the historian's or politician's observation. Usual it is with the poets, when they represent the original and progress of tragical dissensions between quondam friends, in the first place to dispatch the furies abroad with firebrands in their hands, to kindle or blow the coals of cruel and (without the mutual blood of the actors) unquenchable hatred. And to speak the truth without fiction, it seems scarce possible that such light sparkles of human anger, as are usually the first seeds of quarrels between neighbour princes or confederate states, should grow unto such raging and devouring flames as they often do, unless some spirit more potent than the spirit or breath of man did blow them. Now if by *furies* the poets mean infernal fiends, or evil spirits, their language doth not vary much from the ancient dialect of Canaan: *God* (saith the author of the book of Judges, chap. ix. 23, 24.) *sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: that the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.* The mutual disasters of both parties, related in the verses following, is but the just award of Jotham's imprecation, vv. 19, 20: *If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him*

also rejoice in you: but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

5. It would be more easy than safe, out of the histories of times ancient and modern, domestic and foreign, to parallel this last instance so exactly, as well for success as practice, as might be sufficient, if not to persuade the irreligious politician, yet to leave him without excuse for not being persuaded, that there is an immortal King of kings, and Lord of lords, from whose jurisdiction no corner of the earth can be exempted; an everlasting, wise, and righteous Judge, which oversees the inventions of man's heart with a steadfast eye, and measures their actions with a constant hand; one that visiteth the same irregularities by the same rule or canon, and fitteth like sins with like punishments, after thousand of years' distance in time, in places distant some thousand of miles. But leaving the collection of parallel examples, or experiments suitable to the rule proposed, unto the reader's private observation; the proof of the last mentioned conclusion will be more apparent and concludent from the examples or instances in the last section concerning the rule of retaliation.

CHAP. XXX.

250

Of God's special Providence in defeating cunning Plots and Conspiracies, and in accomplishing extraordinary Matters by Means ordinary.

1. When it is said that *in God we live, we move, and have our being*, this is not to be understood only of being or life natural, or of motion properly so called,

but is to be extended unto life and operations purely intellectual; so that the incomprehensible Nature, in respect of our apprehensions, is as properly an agent superartificial as supernatural. All the skill wherewith any intelligent creature is or can be endowed, all the devices and projects of men's hearts, are as essentially subordinate to his incomprehensible wisdom, or counsel of his will, as the life, being, and motions of things natural are to his creative, conservative, or cooperative power. Howbeit, this subordination of the rational creature's cogitations to his infinite wisdom doth no way deprive it of all liberty or freedom in projecting, devising, or consulting, but only of power to appoint success unto its own projects or devices. Thus much, to my apprehension, is included in the wise king's maxim[b]: *Many devices are in the heart of man; but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* This freedom or liberty of man's will in devising or projecting, and the want of all liberty or power to allot success unto his projects, doth more truly argue that which the Latins call *servum arbitrium*, that is, "man's servitude to misery and sin," than if he had no more liberty in the one case than in the other. The more ample the sphere of his liberty in projecting or devising is, or (by Divine permission) may be, the more admirable doth the counsel of the Lord appear, in directing and ordering his free courses most infallibly unto such ends as he appoints, by means, for their kind, ordinary and natural: and if we would diligently consider the works of God in our days, they are as apt to establish true belief unto the rules of Christianity, set down in scripture, as were the miracles of former ages, wherein God's extraordinary power was most seen; yea, the ordinary events of our times are more

[b] Proverbs xix. 21.

apt for this purpose, in this age, than use of miracles could be. For the manifestations of God's most extraordinary power cease by very frequency to be miraculous; and men (such is the curiosity of corrupted nature) would suspect that such events (were they frequent or continual) did proceed from some alteration in the course of nature, rather than from any voluntary exercise of extraordinary power in the God of nature. But the continuance of these ordinary events, which the allseeing wisdom of our God daily and hourly brings to pass, is most apt to confirm the faith of such as rightly consider them: for by their successive variety, the amplitude of his unsearchable wisdom is daily more and more discovered; and by their frequency, the hidden fountain of his counsel, whence this multiplicity flows, appears more clearly to be inexhaustible. Only, the right observation, or live apprehension of these his works of wisdom, is not so easy and obvious unto such as mind earthly things, as his works of extraordinary power are. For such works
251 amate the sense, and make entrance into the soul as it were by force; whereas the effects of his wisdom or counsel make no impression upon the sense, but upon the understanding only, nor upon it, save only in quiet and deliberate thoughts. For this reason, true faith was first to be planted and ingrafted in the church by miracles, but to be nourished and strengthened in succeeding ages by contemplation of his providence. The limits of this present contemplation shall be, by example or instance, to shew in what manner the wisdom of God doth sometimes defeat the cunningest contrivances or deepest plots of politicians, and sometimes accomplish matters of greatest consequence, by means or occurrences light and slender in the esteem of men. But how weak or slender soever they be for their par-

ticular nature, or in themselves, yet the combination or contexture of them must needs be strong, because it is woven by the finger of God.

2. What plot could have been invented against any land or people more deadly than that of Haman's against the people of God, storied, Esther iii. 8, 9. His information against them was bitter, and easy to find entrance into an absolute monarch's ears, whose words must be a law to all, especially to his captivate and conquered subjects; and the Jews, on the other side, more likely to change their lives, than the laws of their God, for any prince's pleasure. What hope (in human sight) for Mordecai to find any favour, whenas he was to execute this bloody law whose particular spleen and revengeful mind against Mordecai had for his sake procured it, in most absolute form, against the whole Jewish nation? You will say, that Esther, lately received to greatest favour with the king, and now made consort of his bed, might prevail much; and for a barbarous king to shew mercy at his queen's entreaty unto such as had done him so good service as Mordecai had done Ahasuerus, is but an ordinary thing. I confess as much, that many occurrences which seem to conspire for Mordecai and his people's deliverance are not extraordinary. For a king in his cups to take a displeasure at his former queen, that would not consent unto his folly, or for his displeasure unto the divorced to shew greater love unto his late espoused queen, is a matter neither strange nor unusual; but that queen Vashti should be displaced, and Esther (unknown to be of the captive Hebrews' kind) admitted to be Ahasuerus's mate, just at that time when Haman, the Jews' sworn enemy, was exalted next to the king and queen in dignity; this can only be ascribed to Him who, as the wise son of Sirach

speaks, hath made all things *double, one against another*, Ecclus. xlii. 24. Again; that the king, the very night before he came to the banquet which Esther had prepared, should take no rest; this was the Keeper of Israel's vigilant care over his people, who neither slumbers nor sleeps whilst his enemies are a plotting mischief against them. Again; that the king, taking no rest, should seek to solace his restless thoughts by reading the Chronicles; that reading them, he should light on that place wherein the now distressed Mordecai's faithful service, in bewraying the treason intended against his person by Bigtan and Teresh his eunuchs, was registered: all this doubtless was only from His wisdom that hath the disposition of all the lots, much more of all the plots which man can cast. Many other occurrences might here be considered, no one of which considered apart from the rest but is ordinary and usual, and yet the entire frame or composure of them
252 such as cannot be referred to any but His workmanship who hath created all things in number, weight, and measure.

Yet a politician, that should have read this story in the Persian Chronicles, could at the first sight have discovered a great oversight in Haman, in not putting sooner in execution this his absolute commission; *Semper nocuit differre paratis.* Perhaps this conditional proposition may be true, that if he had executed his commission with speed, the Jews had fared worse; but for this cause the Lord did not suffer him to entertain this resolution. Yet let us see whether haste in execution could accomplish the like designs against a state in like case.

3. Fliscus, that nobly descended and potent Genoese, with his familiar Verina, had enacted as cruel a law against the Dorian family, and the other nobility of

Genoa; which they had resolved to have written first with characters of blood upon their pretended enemies' breasts, and after their death to have condemned them by proclamation, whenas Fliscus through popularity should have got the diadem[c]. Their plot for effecting their enemies' death and their own advancement was laid as exactly as policy could devise; their practice and execution of means invented was more exact than the pattern which Machiavel gives for like designs. First, because store of armour and munition was necessary for such an action, and provision of such store of munition would be suspicious for a private man to undertake in a popular and factious state, Fliscus persuades young Doria (whose death he especially sought) to be his partner in setting out a man of war against the Turks. Doria kindly accepts the offer, altogether ignorant of the other's intent, which was by this colour to furnish himself with armour and munition out of the country for Doria's overthrow. And being once furnished with such tragical attire, without suspicion of any tragedy to ensue, for to provide himself of suitable actors, he invites a multitude of the commons to a night feast, where, instead of thanksgiving before meat, he makes a pathetical oration, exhorting them to banquet it that night in the nobility's blood, assuring them that they should be their own carvers for ever after of the good things of that city. Some, for love to Fliscus, others, for hate to the nobility, some, for fear of present danger, and others, for hope of greater dignities; for one cause or other, all at length, save two, (who desired to be spared for their faint hearts,) offer themselves to Fliscus's service, And by their forwardness, the city gates, next to the key, whose command made most for their purpose, are

[c] Vide Thuanum, anno 1547.

presently surprised; yet not without some noise; which coming unto Doria's ear, makes him suspect that his mariners were quarrelling; and rising out of his bed, to compose the supposed quarrel by his presence, he falls immediately into his enemies' hands before he was sought for. But however this young gallant had committed no actual crime, that by course of human law deserved a violent death by such executioners, yet the right hand of the Lord had found him out, for consenting by piracy to disturb the public peace lately concluded betwixt Charles the Fifth and the Turk; which peace the Genoese amongst others, the Dorian faction above other Genoese, but especially this young Doria and his father's house, (which had stood for Cæsar against the French,) were bound in conscience to observe. But leaving the cause of his death unto the righteous Judge, his sudden end, in any politician's
253 judgment, was a good beginning to Fliscus' mischievous designs. And what more could Machiavel have in the next place given in charge, but that the galleys, which made some stir at the noise, should with all speed be boarded, to make all sure, until the tragedy were fully acted? This, Fliscus sought to put in execution with as great speed as Machiavel in like case could have wished. But haste (as we say) makes waste; his forward mind had made him forget that his body was not so nimble in armour as out of it; not so apt either to avoid a slip, or to recover himself when he began to slide. By his hasty treading upon a loose plank, (as if the snare had been set for his soul by the Almighty's hand,) he and one or two of his companions fell some yard or two short of their purpose, and drowned themselves and their plot, even whilst it was come to such perfection, that the younger Fliscus yet hoped to make himself duke of Genoa, as

haply he might have done, if the Lord had lent him so much wit as to have concealed his elder brother's death, scarce known to any till he bewrayed it to such as inquired for him, in hope to finish all instantly by his presence. But they, partly amazed with the elder brother's sudden disaster, and seeing no sufficiency in the younger to satisfy their expectation, dissolve the rout, and, ceasing to project the ruin of others, begin every one to seek the best means for his own safety. Thus hath this politic gentleman *consulted shame unto his house;* his stately palace is demolished, and his noble family almost extinct. Yet were all the conditions which greatest plotmasters require in such projects exactly observed in this: the plot itself as accurate as could by the reach of man be devised; their counsel communicated but to a few at the first; the execution of it so speedy, that the appointed actors could have no leisure to deliberate whether it were better to relent or go forwards: and yet the success more dismal and sudden than their enemies could expect or wish. Thus Machiavel's rules have their exceptions, but the prophet's calendar is never out of date, *Non est viri dirigere gressus ejus.* Not Machiavel himself, had he been present, could so have directed Fliscus's steps, that his treadings should not slip; yea, he should have fallen, though Machiavel had held the plank: for his iniquity had overgrown his plot, and being come to full height, it strikes upon that immutable and irresistible doom, which God by Moses had pronounced, Deut. xxxii. 35: *Vengeance and recompense are mine: their feet shall slide in due time: and the day of their destruction is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.* These men we spake of hastened their own destruction, by making too much haste to destroy others.

4. Perhaps the politician will reply: As Haman was too slow, so Fliscus was too hasty, and should have observed the contrary rule,

Differ; habent parvæ commoda magna moræ.

Suppose this hotspur were revived, to react his former or the like cunning plot, and for his better remembrance should take the dolphin and harrow for his device, with this inscription, *Festina lente*, it were not possible his speed should be better, so long as his intentions were as bad or worse than they had been, and his adversaries no worse than they were when he conspired their death.

To omit more examples, ancient or foreign, the fresh memory of the powder treason eclipseth all that have
254 gone before it. No politician can justly accuse the actors of this intended tragedy either of Haman's too long delay or of Fliscus's haste. Such maturity and secresy they used in their actions and consultations as none on earth could have used more, considering the many lets and impediments which did cross their projects. Hell itself had gone so long with this hideous monster, that it was weary, and well content to make an abortive brood, as fearing the pangs that must have accompanied the full delivery of what had been conceived within her bowels would be unsufferable. But Ahithophel had wit at will to plot a treason to his sovereign's overthrow; yet herein blinded by him that gave him sight in other projects, that he could not forecast what harms might befall him by Absalom's folly. And though the archplotter were *vir profundæ dissimulationis*, one that could give traitorous counsel as the destroying angel of the Lord, and hide his counsel as deep as hell; though he had this extraordinary quality in him of making his friends so sure

unto him, that they would adventure both body and soul at any time for his sake, yet thus far infatuated he was, as not to consider, that some of them which were so willing to work a public mischief for his pleasure might also have a desire to secure their private friends from danger, by giving them some general or ambiguous admonition, albeit against their oaths of secresy. That one of them should seek to admonish his honourable friend of the instant danger, was a thing not extraordinary, except in this, that so much good nature could be left in his breast that could consent unto his country's ruin. That a man of the Jesuits' instruction should find an evasion in an oath which he held lawful, is a matter usual. And who knows whether He that permits evil because He knows to turn it unto good, did not at this time make use of the Jesuits' doctrine, of playing fast and loose with his sacred and dreadful name, to animate this discoverer to dispense with that solemn oath of secresy which he had taken, and afterward to forswear the fact so deeply. I do not think he durst have adventured upon either without some secret mental reservation. But without all question it was His counsel which moderateth the main devices of man's heart, that moved him to express his mind in such terms as might represent or call the father's disaster unto the remembrance of his royal son, whom nature had taught to make jealous constructions of every speech, word, or circumstance, that might revive the memory of the intendments against his father, and to forecast all possible interpretations of all occurrences which might portend or intimate the like designs against himself. As the sincerity of his royal heart, and consciousness of clemency towards all, especially towards that faction which deserved none, had brought our sovereign asleep in security, so the collections

which he made out of the discloser's enigmatical admonitions were such as a man would make that had heard the letter read in a dream or slumber, not such as so wise and learned a prince would in other cases have made in his vigilant and waking thoughts. But from what cause soever the dream came, the interpretation was from the Lord, and *let it be unto the king's enemies for ever*. The event hath proved the discloser to have been a false prophet, and to have spoken presumptuously when he said, that "God and man had concurred to punish the iniquity of those times" by such a blow as he meant. We must with the true prophet make confession: *Not unto us, Lord,* 255 *not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory.* It was not God and man, but God alone that did suit and order the several occurrences by which the intended blow was prevented. It was not God, but the devil, that did intend it.

5. That the Jews in the days of Mordecai, that the Genoese within this age, that this land and people within our memory, have not become a prey unto their malicious enemies, was merely from the counsel of the Lord, which must stand for our good, if we decline not unto evil. It is not the breath or vapour of hell that can undermine our state, or shake our prince's throne, whilst God is with us. But if he be against us, what can be for us? If he do but speak the word, even the least word of mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils, shall be sufficient to blow up or overturn a kingdom.

If subjects should rebel as often as princes break jests upon them, they might work their own greater real disgrace, and wrong both themselves and their posterities far more indeed than the other had done in words. But opportunity makes a thief, and want of

opportunity ofttimes keeps great minds, much discontent, from rebellion. But when it shall please Him that hath reserved the perfect knowledge of times and seasons to himself not to dispose their opportunities to any land or people's good, a woman's unseasonable word may breed mightiest empires greater real mischief than emperors' swords for many generations can redress. So it fell out when Justin the emperor had removed Narses the eunuch from his regency of state upon importunate accusations, which, for the present, he could not put off but only by putting him from his place. Sophia his empress, (not so wise herein as after-experience might have taught her to have been,) whether willing (as the old proverb is) to add scath to scorn, or whether desirous to soothe Narses's calumniators in their humour, said she would have Narses come unto Constantinople, there to spin amongst her maids[e]. The jest, being brought unto his ears, provoked him to give her proof of his masculine spleen and indignation. For he thus resolved: "Seeing it hath pleased her excellency to appoint me this task, I shall shortly spin her such a thread, as she and her husband shall hardly be able all the days of their life to untwist." Not he, but the Lord by his mouth, had spoken the word, and it was done. For Alboinus king of the Lombards comes instantly out of Hungary at Narses's call, who could not dissuade him from entering into Italy after it repented him of his former spleen against Sophia, and of his encouraging of this king to revenge his wrong. The eastern empire had received many wounds before this time, but lately cured of the most dangerous by Narses's good service. This was the first perpetual and irrecoverable maim: the second, more grievous, did follow upon as light occasions, but

[e] See the histories which write of Justin the Second.

wherein the concourse of many circumstances were more notable.

6. When Mahomet[f] first begun to counterfeit extatical visions and practise sorcery, he aimed, perhaps, at no greater matters than Simon Magus did, only to be accounted *μέγαντινα*, some great one among his fellow badgers and cameldrivers; he did not so much as dream of Nestorius or his heresy. And Sergius the Monk, when he began to maintain that heresy at Constantinople, did think as little of Arabian sorcery. After these two, by Satan's instigation and God's permission, had made a medley of Jewish infidelity and Grecian heresy, as if it had been a garment of
256 English wool and outlandish lint, they least thought of any mutiny towards in Heraclius's camp for want of pay. The Roman questor was altogether ignorant of Mahomet's visions or his new coined laws, when he thus disgracefully entreated the Arabians or Saracens: "There is scarce sufficient provision for the Roman and Grecian soldiers, and must this rascality of dogs be so importunately impudent in demanding their pay?" *Sed habet et musca splenem.* These poor barbarians were such hungry dogs as looked to be cherished where they fawned, and could be content to change many masters rather than be continually rated thus. Now albeit the Roman questor did thus uncourteously dismiss them without a passport or direction whither to go, yet the Lord, by his harsh language, did hiss for these hornets unto Mahomet's camp, who had been lately foiled by the Persian, until these fugitives raised him up, and made him lord of Egypt. Thus, of the heresy of Sergius, (by birth an Italian, by profession a monk,) and of Mahomet's sorcery, and of these Saracens' mutiny, hath the Divine Providence made up a triple

[f] See the writers of the emperors' lives in the Life of Heraclius.

cord, which cannot to this day be broken, having continued almost these thousand years as a fatal scourge to Christendom.

7. A mere politician, that considers the causes of Justinus's loss by the discontent of Narses, or of Heraclius's prejudice by these Saracens' revolt, would from both draw that aphorism which divers have done from a trusty Gascoigne's[g] answer unto Charles the Seventh, French king. The aphorism is, that princes must beware what speeches they use unto great soldiers, or men of valour, seeing that Gascoigne ingenuously told his lord and master, that for a foul disgrace he could turn traitor, though all the riches of France, though the French kingdom itself, would not suffice for a bribe to make him prove false, or to corrupt his loyal mind. The rule or aphorism is in many cases good; yet, if this and all other like caveats were strictly observed, and other matters not amended, He that at his appointed time turns disgraceful speeches unto the speaker's overthrow can make the mildest words which generals or other confederates in arms can utter, for accomplishing their joint purposes, to effect their own ruin, and delivery of their enemies.

8. It is a known story of a family or faction in Perusium, who having gathered a competent army of their allies to surprise the city from which they had been lately banished, made their forcible entrance into it by night, bursting all the chains that otherwise would have hindered the passage of the horsemen until they came unto the market stead, or chief place to be surprised. But here their Hercules, wanting room (by reason of the press) to fetch a full blow with his club for bursting that chain, much stronger (in all like-

[g] Camerarius ex Ferrono.

lihood) than the rest, cries "Back! back[h]!," unto those that were next unto him, and they the like unto such as were behind them, until the same words had run like an echo to the hindmost ranks or rear; who, imagining that those in the front had descried some danger, resolved to be the first in retiring, as they had been the last in entering: and hence they in the front perceiving themselves suddenly destituted of their company give their enterprise for lost, which one blow more, or one word less, had presently effected. But perpetual exile was by Divine justice the enterprisers' due; and though iron chains may be burst by the strength of man, yet *the counsel of the Lord that shall stand* more firm than walls of brass or rocks of adamant, that his enemies at the appointed time may fall before it.

257 The only use which the politician hath made of this and like experiments is this: first, that generals should be very wary what words should pass throughout their army; and for this purpose to keep servants, women, or other talkative or clamorous creatures, far from the army when any service is toward; secondly, to accustom their soldiers only to respect their commanders' speeches, and to account of others as wind that blows afar off. These caveats were given above seventy years ago; and yet have greater forces than these Italians had been upon as light occasions defeated in their intended surprisals of cities by night, after they had blown open their gates with petars. However, the admonition hath its use and seasons, though oftentimes observed without success, because it is too much relied upon. Mordecai spake with confidence unto Esther: *If thou holdest thy peace at this*

[h] See Guicciardine and Machiavel, locis citatis.

time, comfort and deliverance shall appear unto the Jew out of another place; because, as he supposed, the counsel of God was for their good. But though soldiers should hold their peace, and generals speak nothing but what the politician should prompt, yet shall destruction come upon them upon other occasions, if the counsel of the Lord be once against them; yea, though the parties disagreeing should lay all enmity aside, and consult for the establishing of peace, yet shall they conclude in blood, if the Lord of hosts be displeased with them.

9. A fit instance to this purpose is registered, as Camerarius tells us, in foreign annals, though not intimated by our English historians, who had as much reason as any other to have recorded it, if the story had been true; but seeing they have omitted it, I will not expect the reader's historical assent unto it, but only commend it to him as an example for illustrating the probability of the last observation. The English and French armies being ready to join battle in Normandy, the French captains persuade their king to entreat a parley with the king of England, that so all matters might be compromised, without further harm or danger to either party. The place agreed upon for the parley was a ruinated chapel, a little distant from both armies. A friendly compromise was by both kings resolved upon, to be further ratified upon deliberation of their several councils. But before their parting, a huge snake, whether stirred up by the noise of their attendants which waited without, or upon other occasions, seemed, by her hissing and swelling neck, to make towards them. Both of them, alike afraid, draw their swords, and yet neither willing to trust other within the walls, run out with their naked swords in their hands: their attendants, upon this sight, mis-

deeming some outfall in the chapel between them, do the like; and the armies upon this view join battle, and could not be recalled until much blood on both parties was, and more had been spilt, unless the night had come upon them.

10. Be this as it may be, a true story or a fiction, the possibility of such unexpected occurrences (all which are at the Almighty's disposition) are infinite, and cannot be comprehended, much less prevented by the wit of man, which is but finite: so that although the plots and devices of man's heart be many, yet hath the Lord more counterplots perpetually in store; and therefore, of all counsels, *the counsel of the Lord shall stand.*

Whilst I read some speculative politicians, that seek, by observing the errors of former times, in managing
258 civil affairs or projects, to rectify or correct their oversights, and take upon them to make an ephemerides of future events; their discourses, in my slender observation, argue a greater ignorance in them of Divine Providence, than their practices would in the mathematics that would labour out of a surd number to extract a perfect square. He that knows the rules of arithmetical division, might in every working, or attempt of resolving a full number into its proper square, come nearer and nearer to the square number, and yet be sure not to find it, though he spent Nestor's years in dividing and subdividing the same number, or resolving fractions into fractions. The reason is this: how little soever a surd number exceeds the next square, yet the overplus is in division infinite: and so are the events which the politician seeks to rectify or determine of, and therefore not certainly rectifiable or determinable, save only by Him whose wisdom is actually infinite. It is an error incident to little chil-

dren to think they might easily shake hands with the man in the moon, or with Endymion kiss the moon itself, if they were upon the next hill, where it seems to them to set; and if you bring them thither, they think they came but a little too late: if they could be now at the next hill, where they see it go down, they imagine they might do so yet. Such for all the world is the practical politician's error, the cause of both in proportion the same. Children are thus deceived because they imagine no distance between heaven and earth, or between heaven and that part of earth which terminates their sight. And so the secular politician's mind reacheth no farther than the hemisphere of his own faculty. Either he knows not or considers not, how far the height and depth of His wisdom and counsel that sits in the heavens, and rules the earth, exceeds the utmost bounds or horizon of his foresight and limited skill; in this only different from the child, that his wit is more swift and nimble than the other's body, so that he is not so soon weary of his pursuit. But if he miss of his purpose at the first, he hopes at his next flight to speed; and thus in seeking after true felicity, (which was hard by him when he began his course,) he runs round all the days of his life, even as he is led by him that daily compasseth the earth. Better might painters hope, by looking on the multitude of men now living, to draw accurate pictures of such as shall be in the age to come, than any politician can expect, either by observation of former times or experience of his own, to prescribe exact rules for managing of future projects. For if we consider the whole frame or composition of circumstances, or all the ingredients (if I may so speak) of every event, there is as great a variety in human actions as there is in men's faces. Never were

there two events of moment upon earth altogether alike; each differs from other either in the substance, number, or quality of occurrences, or in the proportion of their consonancy or dissonancy unto the counsel of the Lord; as there is no visage but differs from another, if not in colour or complexion, yet in shape or figure. I have been, perhaps, rather too long than too bold, in deciphering the vanity of this proud critic, which accuseth Christianity of cowardice in actions, and devotion of stupidity and dulness in consultation of state. But so might bats and owls condemn the eagle of blindness, were trial of sight to be made in that part of twilight wherein darkness hath gotten the victory of light. Some men, not able to discern a friend from a foe at three paces' distance in
259 the open sun, will read their Paternoster, written in the compass of a shilling, by moonshine, much better than others, clearer sighted, can read a proclamation print. The purblind see best by night, yet not therefore better sighted than others are, because the absolute trial of sight is best made by day. So is the mere politician more quicksighted than God's children in matters permitted by Divine Providence to the managing of the prince of darkness. For albeit the righteous Lord do in no case permit or dispense with perjury, fraud, or violence; yet he suffers many events to be compassed by all, or some of these, or worse means. Now when matters, usually managed by special providence, come by divine permission once to catching, he that makes least conscience of his ways will shew most wit and resolution. For whatsoever falls to Satan's disposals shall assuredly be collated on him that will adventure most; it is his trade and profession to lend wit, might, and cunning, for satisfying present desires upon the mortgage of souls and

consciences; and his scholar, or client, (the politic atheist,) perceiving fraud and violence to prosper well in some particulars, imagines these or like means, throughly multiplied, to be able to conquer all things which he most desires. But when Satan's commission is recalled, or his power, by God's providence, contracted, the cunningest intentions or violent practices of politicians prove much like to a peremptory warrant out of date, which being directed to one county is served in another: both endanger the party prosecuting, and turn to the advantage of the prosecuted. I conclude this chapter and section with the observation of a nameless author, but set down in verses related by Camerarius.

Si vitam spectes hominum, si denique mores,
Artem, vim, fraudem, cuncta putes agere.
Si propius spectes, fortuna est arbitra rerum:
Nescis quam dicas, et tamen esse vides.
At penitus si introspicias, atque ultima primis
Connectas, tantum est rector in orbe Deus.

Who looks on men, and on their manners vile,
Weens nought is wrought, nought got sans force or guile;
Who nearer looks, spies (who knows what) her wheel
Who cozeneth fraud, and oft makes force to reel:
But eagle sights, which pierce both far and near,
Eye One who only ruleth all this sphere.

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SECTION IV.

Of God's special Providence in suiting Punishments unto the Nature and Quality of Offences committed by Men.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the Rule of Retaliation or Counterpassion; and how forcible Punishments inflicted by this Rule, without any Purpose of Man, are to quicken the engraffed Notion of the Deity, and to bring forth an Acknowledgment of Divine Providence and Justice.

ARISTOTLE did rightly deny retaliation or counterpassion to be αὐτοδικαῖον, "exact justice;" and yet it may be, Pythagoras's thoughts did soar much higher than his, when he pitched upon the affirmative. In ordinary offences, committed by unequal or extraordinary persons, Pythagoras's tenent is not universally true; as, if a great person should beat his far inferior without just cause, it stands neither with the law of God or rule of equity to beat him in the same fashion, or according to the same measure, again; but when kings and monarchs do extraordinary wrongs unto their subjects, or practise prodigious cruelties upon their inferiors, they usually suffer the like harms or plagues themselves. "But who," saith Cominæus[i],

[i] Interrogavi paulo ante, quis habiturus sit quæstionem de potentibus, quis illos accusabit, quis litem definiet, quis pœnam irrogabit? Certe querimoniæ et lachrymæ miserorum hominum, quos crudeliter vexarunt, item viduarum et pupillorum gemitus atque suspiria, quos parentibus atque maritis inhumane spoliarunt, breviter eorum, quos afflixerunt et fortunis omnibus denudarunt, lamentationes atque plangor, erunt accusationis loco, quam

"shall call potentates in question? who shall accuse, who shall condemn, who shall punish them? All" (as he resolves) "that can be required to a formal process shall be supplied by the complaints and tears of such as are aggrieved by them, by the sighs and groans of the fatherless and widows: these are more authentic than any witnesses of fact, more powerful than any attorney, or advocate, before the supreme tribunal of God. So good and gracious a Judge is he, and so compassionate to the oppressed, that even in this life he often punisheth kings for their sakes so evidently and so remarkably, as there can be no place for doubt amongst the observant that he is a most just avenger of human impiety. But most princes" (as the same author notes) "are so unexperienced, so inconsiderate, that whiles prosperous for- 261
tune smiles upon them, they fear no storms, no punishment, no conviction. And for want of this fear, which is the beginning of wisdom, God suddenly raiseth up some adversary or other when they least suspect."

Affliction in some kind or other is the surest friend, the most trusty counsellor that any prince can use; for, of all the rest of his retinue, it only knoweth not how to flatter. And affliction or calamity of the same kind which they have undeservedly brought upon others, (when that befalls them,) is the most sincere, most powerful preacher, that enters in at any court-gate, for bringing potentates to the knowledge of God

illi coram supremo Dei tribunali sistent. Qui magnitudine scelerum offensus, non semper concedit diuturniorem impunitatem, sed illos aliquando verberat præsentibus pœnis, ita quidem evidenter et clare, ut dubitari non possit, ipsum esse justissimum impietatis nostræ ultorem. Plerique vero principes, imperiti quidem illi et inconsulti, quam diu prospera utuntur fortuna, nihil tale metuunt, sed cum maxime securi sunt omnium rerum, tunc ecce Deus repente illis adversarium aliquem excitat, de quo minime suspicati fuerant.—Cominæus, in fine lib. 10. p. 493.

and of his laws, or to acknowledge him to be as well the Judge of judges as Lord of lords.

2. For as justice cannot be done upon private offenders but by the warrant of supreme authority, so when we see such judgments befall supreme magistrates themselves, as to the notions of natural reason are just and right, and as it were exactly fitted to that which they have done to others; this clearly argues there is a supreme tribunal in heaven, which hath more sovereign authority over the highest thrones and principalities on earth, than they have over the meanest subject that lives under them, or silliest wretch that sojourns within their territories.

3. And if the tallest cedars be not without the reach of Divine justice, shall it not control the lower shrubs? Never was there any man on earth, (I am persuaded,) save one, (who was more than man,) but upon a diligent survey of what he had done and suffered, might have taken just occasion to repeat that lesson which the sufferance of such calamity from the hands of men as he had procured unto others his neighbour princes had taught Adonibezek to say by heart, *Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me*, Judges i. 7. This tyrant's offences had been many and gross, more barbarous than many princes in this age would (perhaps) commit; yet an usual practice upon the conquered in those ancient times, a politic emblem of slavery in thus fitting their hands for the oar, and disenabling them to use the pike, or other like instrument of war. However, more at this day would be ready, upon like provocation or custom, to deal as boisterously with their vanquished foes as Adonibezek did with his, rather than to make the like ingenuous confession, though

God did call their sins to mind by such sensible remembrances as awaked him. This I have generally observed, that lighter touches of God's afflicting hand did more affect the outrageous people of the old world (unless such as were delivered up into a reprobate sense) than his severe blows do many amongst us, which have the reputation of moderate, of civil, yea of sanctified men. The minds of most men are so blinded and choked with cares of this world, that they look no further than into second causes; and hence (like idiots) they suspect such blows as are reached them from heaven to be given by such as are next unto them. But even among such as look far enough beyond second causes, amongst such as see God in his word, and daily hear his promises, some there be, which either distinguish too nicely between God's temporal punishments and his fatherly chastisements, or else make not right application of this distinction to their own particular. From the one or other mistake, (perhaps from both,) whatsoever affliction befalls them, after they have taken special notice of their 262
regeneration, is entertained as a mere loving correction, sent for no other end than to work for their future good, not as a touch of God's punitive justice, requiring serious repentance for some particular sins past. But whatsoever may be thought of the distinction itself, this application of it was not in use amongst the ancient saints and people of God.

4. Few modern spirits of ingenuous birth and breeding but would scorn to be suspected of such rude and vast behaviour as some of Jacob's sons used towards their father, others towards Joseph or the Shechemites; and yet how quickly doth the fear rather than the sufferance of lighter affliction than Joseph suffered at their hands call their offences against him to their

remembrance. They knew themselves to be as free from the crime wherewith he charged them as he was from merit of death when they put him into the pit, or from desert of bondage when they sold him to the Midianites. Notwithstanding, his very not being so flexible to their requests as their instant occasions required, (though nothing so inexorable as they had been to him in his extremity, when they knew him, as now they do not, to be their brother,) caused them to make this mutual confession one to another: *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this anguish come upon us.* Gen. xlii. 21. This speedy relentance upon this warning is an assured testimony that the fear of God, and of his just judgments, did in some measure lodge in all their hearts, but most abundantly now in Reuben's, whose former sins against his father did equalize if not superabound his brethren's sins against young Joseph, of whose miscarriage he was least guilty. For unto the rest confessing their sins, as was set down before, in the next verse he thus replies; *Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.* Yet was this confession uttered thirteen years after the fact was committed, until that time never called in question.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the geometrical Proportion or Form of distributive Justice, which the Supreme Judge sometimes observes in doing to great Princes as they have done to others.

1. But these sons of Jacob were private men; and God, in putting them into the same fear and anguish

of soul into which they had put their harmless brother, might observe the strict rule of retaliation or counterpassion, without swerving from the rule of equity, seeing their brother was their equal; but doth the righteous Lord observe the same rule betwixt parties for condition or state of life most unequal? doth he mete out punishment unto princes in just equality to the harms which they have wrongfully done to their subjects or inferiors? Surely he is no respecter of persons in cases of justice or revenge. But where the blow or matter of punishment, which lights on potentates is much less, the grief or smart may be fully as great as their fury can procure unto their subjects. In the case between kings and subjects, properly so called, or between superior and inferior subjects, there 263
is a kind of allowance to be made, according to geometrical proportion, without swerving from the exact rule of retaliation. It is a memorable comparison which Cominæus[k] (according to this allowance) hath made between the evils which Lewis the Eleventh, French king, had done to others, and the like evils which God in the end of his reign did bring upon him.

2. To be disrespected by them whom he had advanced far above their deserts, and graced with dignities whereof their education and profession was un-

[k] Componam ergo illius acerbitates ac dolores, quos pertulit ante mortem, cum iis malis et incommodis, quibus alios affecit. Magnitudine quidem inter se differunt, ac longe aliud etiam fuit ipsius munus: verum, quo prosperiori fuit usus fortuna, et quo major extitit ejus per omnem Europam authoritas: eo quoque vehementius fuit afflictus, dum præter consuetudinem suam et naturam aliquid perferre coactus est. In eo, quem diximus, eremita, summam perpetuo spem habebat, ac subinde missis nunciis interpellabat eum ut vitam sibi produceret. Nam etsi res suas, quasi jam moriturus, constituerat: tamen redintegrato animo, sperabat se posse evadere.—Cominæus, lib. 10. in initio, pag. 469.

capable, could not but be a great grief unto this great king, as the like ungratefulness would be unto any other; yet a just and usual award of Divine justice upon such princes as thus neglect the rule of human distributive justice in the dispensing of honourable favours. But for a prince which had always required exact obedience, always accustomed to expect an observance from his subjects more than ordinarily is given unto other princes, to be in his old age enforced to observe and flatter the churlish humour of his physician[1], whose untoward service he had recompensed with a standing fee of a thousand crowns a month, besides other gratuities extraordinary; this was a perpetual torment, whereof Lewis in his perplexity could not but often complain unto others, yet could not remedy. For this was a disease which he durst not make known unto his physician, whose displeasure he feared more than any thing else besides death; which was the only cause why he so much feared his displeasure. And is it not (as the wise king speaks) a vanity of vanities, or more than so, a misery of miseries, that the fear of this last point or close of life should make great men slaves for the most part of their lives, and bring a necessity upon them of fearing every one with more than a slavish fear, that may in probability be conceived as an instrument or messenger of its approach. [m]Now this king was so excessively

[1] Medico suo menstruum dabat stipendium, ut supra quoque diximus, decem aureorum millia: nec id modo, verum etiam episcopatum Ambianensem ejus Nepoti, et munera publica multa largiebatur ejus propinquis et amicis. Et tamen medicus tam erat verbis in eum asper et durus, ut nihil supra: valde igitur eum rex metuebat, et ad suos familiares, de illius asperitate nimia, sæpe querebatur, neque tamen audebat eum a se demittere.—Ibid. pag. 472.

[m] Mortem nullus unquam vehementius exhorruit: nemo etiam majori studio et ratione de remediis unquam cogitavit, quam ipse. Familiaribus suis per omnem

afraid of death, that he had given it in strict charge unto his friends and followers, not to give him warning of this his last enemy by name, whensoever it should (to their seeming) approach; but to exhort him only to a confession or expiation of his sins: yet was it his ill hap or fate, after he had set his house in order, and after his dejected spirits had been somewhat raised with new hopes of recovery, to have death rung into his ears by his servants, after such an indiscreet and unmannerly fashion, as if they had sought to put him into purgatory whilst he was alive. His barber, with others (whom he had rewarded far above their deserts), without any preamble or circumlocution of respective language, (as if they had come unto him rather as judges to pronounce the sentence of death upon him, than as gentle remembrancers of his mortality,) 264
told him bluntly and peremptorily that his hour was come, that he was not to expect any further comfort from his physician, or from the hermit who (as he thought) had prolonged his life.

3. If we could unpartially weigh the quality and condition of the parties who were thus uncivilly and unseasonably bold with him, in the one scale of just estimation, and the greatness of his person, his natively timorous disposition, and accustomance in the other; the disparity would move us to be of Cominæus's mind in this point; that this untoward remembrance or denunciation of death was more bitter and grievous unto Lewis, than the sharp message of death which he had sent by commissioners[n] unto those two great

vitam, et mihi quoque sæpenumero mandaverat, si quando ipsum in ea necessitate positum esse conspiceremus, ut nulla prorsus facta mentione mortis, ad peccatorum expiationem solummodo adhortaremur; ac videbatur esse nunc temporis molliori animo, quam ut adeo duram sententiam audiret.—Ibid. p. 470.

[n] Ipse duos Galliæ principes ducem Nemorensem et Connes-

peers of France, the duke of Nemours and the earl of St. Paul, giving them but a short respite to marshal their thoughts and order their consciences before their final encounter with this last enemy of mortality, which they could not fear so much as Lewis did. As this great king had done unto these great subjects, so have his servants done to him.

4. Lewis again had caused certain places of [o] little ease to be made, or (at least) did well accept the invention of iron cages or grates, little more in compass than the square of a tall man's length, wherein he detained such as offended him; some for divers months, others for many years together. [p] And through consciousness of this his rigorous dealing with others, he confined himself (for a long time) to a custody or durance as [q]strait for his greatness, as the iron cages were for their mediocrity. They were not more desirous to see these close prisons opened, or to hear of

tablium, capite mulctaverat, et quod alterum necasset, jam cum esset moriturus, ipsum pœnituit. Et quemadmodum illis per homines delectos, denunciatum fuit supplicium, paucis verbis, et breve temporis spatium, quo de salute sua statuerent, concessum: ad eundem plane modum isti, nulla verborum usi circuitione, cum ei præsignificarent mortem: ut officio nostro satisfaciamus, aiebant, res ipsa postulat. Spem nullam deinceps collocare debes, vel in eremita, vel in quovis alio. Nam actum est de te prorsus.—Cominæus, l. 10. p. 469.

[o] Carceres paravit horrendos, et valde tetros, nempe caveas aliquot, partim ferreas, partim ligneas, ferreis laminibus, coopertas, latitudine octo pedum, et altitudine paulo majori, quam est statura hominis. Excogitaverat hanc rationem cardinalis Baluensis, et in eam, quæ primum perfecta fuit, inclusus est ipse, perque totos quatuordecim annos detentus.—Ibid. pag. 472.

[p] Et sicut per ipsius imperium carceres illi funesti fuerunt inventi: ad eundem plane modum ipse quoque ante mortem, consimilibus omnino vinculis sese induit, inque majori versabatur metu, quam illi, quos aliquando captivos detinuerat.—Ibid. pag. 473.

[q] Ingrediendum erat omnibus non quidem per patentem portam, sed per parvulum ostium, et præter paucos aliquot familiares, quorum erat opera necessaria, nemo cuisquam, nisi voluntate ipsius, introibat.—Ibid.

the day of their deliverance from them, than he was careful to cause the iron fences wherewith he had encompassed the castle, wherein he had imprisoned himself, to be close shut, save only at such times, as he appointed them (upon special occasions) to be opened. His miserable captives were not afraid of passengers, or of such as came to visit them, they needed no guard to secure them: Lewis caused certain archers to keep centinel, as well by day as by night, to shoot at all that came near his castle-gates otherwise than by his special command or appointment. In fine, he was more afraid to be delivered out of his prison by the nobility of France, than his captives were to be put in such cages. That which he feared from his nobility was not death or violence, but his deposition, or removal from the present government, from which many wise princes in their declining age have with honour and security sequestered themselves.

5. Whether Lewis in entertaining the invention of iron cages and the use which he made of them, or the cardinal which to please his severe humour first invented them, were more faulty, I cannot tell, nor will 265
I dispute; the rule of retaliation was more conspicuously remarkable in the cardinal: for as Cominæus tells us, (who himself had lodged eight months in one of them,) the cardinal was by Lewis's command detained prisoner (fourteen years together) in the first that was made. It was well observed, whether by a Christian or heathen I now remember not,

> ——— *Neque lex hac justior ulla est,*
> *Quam necis artifices, arte perire sua.*
> A law more just than this cannot be set,
> Which cruel skill doth catch in its own net.

One Perillus was the body or subject of the emblem whereof this motto was the soul. He died a miserable

death in that brazen bull which he had made at the tyrant's request for the deadly torture of others. And albeit this cardinal did not die (for aught I read) in the cage of his own invention, yet had he a greater share of vexation in it than was intended for others. What good effect this long and hard durance wrought in the cardinal's soul is not specified by my author. But it is an observation of excellent use which an heathen philosopher[r] hath made upon like accidents in general: "That law, or rule of equity," saith he, "which wretched men in effect deny whilst they do wrong to others, the same law the same men desire might be in force whilst they suffer wrong or harms by others. For example, he that doth wrong doth wish, what the fool saith in his heart, there were no God; for so he might hope to escape that vengeance which, whilst he thinks of a God, or justice Divine, hangs over his head uncessantly, threatening to fall upon him. But he that suffers wrong is willing to believe there is a God, and heartily wisheth it so to be, that by his assistance he may be supported against the evils which he suffers. It is for this reason," saith this philosopher, "expedient that such as grieve and afflict others should have experience of the like affliction, to the end that, being taught by their own loss or grievance, they might learn that truth which, being blinded by avarice or other unruly desire, they could not see before. And this truth or good lesson they may easily learn, so they will undergo the mulct or punishment due to their offence with submission or patience."

[r] Hierocles in hæc aurea Pythagoræ carmina:

> Mortales quæcunque Deus mittentibus, angunt;
> Ut tua sors tulerit, patiens ne ferre recuses:
> Nec spernenda medela tamen. Sed noris et istud,
> Parcius ista viris immittere numina justis.

6. Albeit the cardinal had been a flat atheist before, or one at least that had not God in his thoughts whilst he sought to please the rigorous humour of this king with an invention so displeasing unto others, yet after experience had taught him how exactly that misery had befallen himself, which by his furtherance had befallen many, or was likely to befall them, he did (no question) often wish in his heart that the rule of retaliation, wherewith he was visited, might be constant and unpartial, that king Lewis himself might not be exempted from its visitation. Now unto what rule or law could so great a king be subject besides that one everliving rule or eternal law itself? He that heartily wisheth justice might be done on such as have full power and authority to do it but will not do it, doth implicitly, yet necessarily, acknowledge a law or judge supreme, justice itself; so is God. And he that seriously desires mitigation of that pain or misery which by the irresistible force of human authority is 266
inflicted on him, doth acknowledge a mercy more sovereign than any earthly power; and this can be no other than God, who is mercy itself. Many may cast the fear of God out of their thoughts, but none all notions of Divine justice out of their hearts. These notions or apprehensions of an everliving rule of equity, mercy, and justice, are so deeply rooted in the consciences of all, and are themselves of such an immortal nature, as they can never be so utterly extinguished in any but that affliction will inspire them with fresh life and motion, and make them breathe out supplications to the Supreme Judge, either for mercy towards themselves or for justice upon others.

7. The particular evils which Lewis, by Divine justice, in this life suffered, (haply,) had never come to

the exact notice of posterity, unless Cominæus's[8] wits had been set on work to observe them by his experience or foresufferance of the like evils from Lewis, or by his procurement. Besides this author's imprisonment eight months in the iron cage, another evil there was, wherein no ancient servant or follower of this king but had a large portion: for he had either a natural inclination, or a disposition acquired by custom, to hold them whom he did not formally sentence to any set punishment in a perpetual fear or anxiety of mind. Now the consciousness of this his disposition and customary practice in his best and able days, did, as it were, bind him over to endure the like torments in his feeble and declining years: *Metus pessimus tyrannus*, "To live in perpetual fear, is to live under the most cruel tyranny that can be." And unto this tyranny greatest tyrants are more subject and more obnoxious than their inferiors can be to them. For though it be possible for one man to keep many thousands in perpetual awe and fear, yet is it not so much for every man (of so many) in his own particular to fear one man (how greatly soever) as it is for one man (how great soever) to stand in fear but of half so many. Yet can no man be so great, or so well guarded, as not to have often and just occasion to fear some harm or other from every one whom he hath made to fear him more than is fitting. Whence he that seeks to sow the seeds of fear in the hearts of others

[8] Multos ipse, per omnem vitam, perpetuo metu et solicitudine excruciaverat: et nunc ecce videmus eum ad consimilem plane modum affligi. Cui enim se committat, qui liberis etiam suis, et genero fidem non habet? Hæc autem non ad ipsum modo pertinent: verum etiam ad eos omnes principes, qui metui volunt: qua quidem in re quanta sit servitus, quum ad senectutem pervenerunt, tunc demum aperte sentiunt, quia coguntur invicem plurimos formidare.—Com. ibid. pag. 471.

doth but thereby, as it were, consecrate his own heart or breast to be the receptacle or storehouse of the multiplied increase or crop. For even in this case that saying is most true, *As every one sows, so shall he reap.*

What other issue could be expected from Lewis's rigid practice upon others, and his own native, timorous and ignoble disposition, than such tormenting jealousies and perplexities, as Cominæus tells us in his old age did seize upon him, and enforce him to fear the virtue and worth of his dearest friends, not daring to trust son or daughter, or son-in-law? Now it is more than a purgatory, even an hell upon earth, for a man which can take no joy in himself, to deprive himself of all comfort from his dearest friends, and them of all comfort from him. So uncomfortable[t] was the duke of Bourbon his son-in-law's company to Lewis, and Lewis's company unto him, that when he came to visit him in peace, and out of loyal respect and duty, 267 he caused a sly search to be made of him, and of another earl his companion, whether they did not bear offensive weapons under their garments; thus polluting the nuptial joys of his late married son and heir with sordid jealousies of his son-in-law.

[t] Borbonius et comes Dunensis, legatos Flandriæ, qui nuptiis Delphini interfuerant Ambosæ, honoris causa, quod fieri solet, deduxerant. Ubi Plessium revertissent magno cum comitatu; e stipatorum, et satellitum suorum præfectis quendam accersit, et explorare jubet, an essent armati sub veste; sed ut dissimulanter faceret, mandat, interea dum familiariter cum iis loquitur.—Com. ibid.

CHAP. XXXIII.

How the former Law of Retaliation hath been executed upon Princes according to arithmetical Proportion, or according to the Rule of commutative Justice.

1. But however Lewis of France were punished according to the rule of retaliation or counterpassion, yet in the manner of retribution the righteous Lord did observe a kind of geometrical proportion. The affliction or visitation itself was the just award of punitive justice, and yet the form of proceeding bears the character of human distributive justice, which hath usually some respect to the dignity of the persons awarded. So human laws, which punish capital crimes with death, are dispensed with by the favour of the prince for the manner of death. That is not so ignominious or dishonourable in the execution upon nobles as upon inferiors involved in the same capital crime or treason; no, not albeit the nobles be principals, and inferiors but accessories or assistants. But this favourable kind of punishment for the external form God doth not always use towards princes. If many times he may seem to bear respect or favour unto their place or persons, this ariseth not from their greatness, but from some other cause best known unto himself. His judgments upon princes and other potentates are often executed according to the most strict arithmetical proportion that can be required in the rule of retaliation upon equals, as well for the manner as for the matter of punishment. And although God in this life never plagueth any according to the full measure of their offences committed against himself, yet he often visiteth kings and monarchs with a fuller visible measure of calamity than they have brought upon others, and with calamity of the same kind.

Though Pharaoh had been the greatest monarch, and his court the most glorious seat of nobility till their time on earth, yet because he and his nobles had plotted cruelty against the innocent without relentance or remorse, the dignity of his or their persons procures no mitigation, either for the matter or manner of punishment. Their dues are fully paid them, as we say, in kind; the guiltless blood of poor Hebrew infants is rendered sevenfold into the bosom of the Egyptian nobility and men of war.

2. Never did any state or kingdom, since the foundations of the world were laid, receive so terrible a wound within its own territories in one day as at this time Egypt did, but females did in some measure feel the smart. Yet in this last, as in the former plagues, no Egyptian woman had cause to lament for herself, for her sister or daughter, but many for their husbands, their brothers or sons. What was the reason? The Egyptian midwives[u], (and they were women,) if no other of their sex besides, had been more merciful to the infant males of the Hebrews than the Egyptian 268
men had been. And as they had done, so hath the Lord requited the one and rewarded the other. To the merciless courtiers, politicians, and men of war, he hath rendered vengeance and judgment without mercy, and punished them with miserable and ignominious death, shewing compassion on the weaker and more pitiful sex.

3. It was a rare document of Divine justice to ordain, and of Divine wisdom so to contrive, that the dogs should lap king Ahab's blood in the same place[x] where they had lapped the blood of Naboth (stoned to death through his connivance or permission). As sure a token it was of justice tempered with mercy, and of

[u] Exod. i. 15, &c.

[x] 1 Kings xxi. 19.

the great King's special grace or favour unto this graceless king of Israel, that the dogs[y] which lapped his blood should not so much as touch his body. Being slain in battle, his death was honourable, as the world accounteth honour, yet was it not so much the dignity of his royal person, as his humiliation upon the prophet's challenge, which made him capable of this favour; but not a dram either of disgrace or misery, from which Ahab was by God's mercy in part released, which did not fall into the scale of justice wherein the impiety of proud Jezebel was exactly weighed. The measure of her husband's punishment is not so much less as hers was fuller than Naboth's had been. The sight of her commanding letters[z] caused poor Naboth to be stoned to death by the men of his city; and at Jehu's call her body is dashed against the stones by her own servants[a]. The dogs lapped Naboth's blood, but they devoured Jezebel's flesh: she had been shamelessly cruel in her life, and she hath a most shameful and a most fearful death. Nor would the all-seeing Judge suffer that respect to be done to her corpse which her cruel executioner[b] intended, upon remembrance that she had been daughter to a king. It was, I must confess, a rueful case, and yet a judgment more righteous than rueful, that she which had issued from a royal womb, she from whose womb had issued royal progeny, (for she had been respectively lawful daughter, lawful wife, and lawful mother unto three kings,) should be entombed, ere her corpse were cold, in the entrails of dogs[c], should have no better burial than the dead ass or other carrion, albeit she died in her own royal palace. But thus the Almighty's arm sometimes reacheth greatest princes, even in this life,

[y] 1 Kings xxii. 38. [z] 1 Kings xxi. 8. [a] 2 Kings ix. 33.
[b] 2 Kings ix. 34. [c] Ibid.

heavier blows than they can give unto their poorest subjects. But where the blow or matter of punishment which falls on them is much lighter, the wound or torment may be more grievous, as was observed before, than their fury can procure unto their despised brethren.

4. But neither doth the sacred relation concerning Pharaoh's overthrow or Jezebel's death contain a more perspicuous ocular demonstration of Divine justice executed, according to the rigour of retaliation, than hath been represented, or rather really acted, upon a public stage, within the memory of some now living. The subject of this rueful spectacle was Henry the second French king of that name. The accident is not recorded by God's Spirit, yet the experiment (as unpartial writers, which I take it were eyewitnesses of it, have related) is as exactly parallel to the rules of God's Spirit, and affords as good instruction for modern princes as examples in the sacred story did to posterity. This youthful king in the beginning of his reign had licensed others to feed their eyes with the sight of a deadly duel, authorized by him in favour of Vivonus, to the disgrace and prejudice (as the court of 269
France expected) of Chabotius, whose hands notwithstanding the Lord did strengthen to kill the favourite, who, after many bitter provocations, had drawn him within the lists, more against his will than an old bear is brought to the stake. The death of Vivonus, though most just, doth no way excuse the barbarous injustice of this king, who hath this justice done upon him: he had made a sport of shedding blood, and he himself is slain in *ludicrocer tamine*[d], running at tilt, and slain by that hand which had been his instrument to apprehend those noble and religious gentlemen which had been

[d] Vide Thuanum, ad finem lib. 20.

lately imprisoned, and in whose misery the court of France did then rejoice; and, adding gall to wormwood, solemnized these and the like triumphant shows or sportings in their sight: yet was it not count Montgomery's hand, but the right hand of the Lord, which did at one and the same instant untie the king's beaver, and guide the splinter or glance of Montgomery's spear into that eye which had beheld a duel, that could not be determined without the death of the one or other combatant (both being Frenchmen and his natural subjects), with such delight as young gallants do ordinary prizes or other like spectacles of recreation. Of Vivonus's death few or none but Frenchmen were eyewitnesses; but of this king's tragical triumph Spain and Germany, with other countries, were spectators by their proxies or ambassadors: as if the Lord would have these then present to carry this message to their masters, to be by them directed to the rest of Christian princes: *Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere divos.*

> Take warning by this prince's fate,
> Not to approve what God doth hate.

God is no accepter of persons: in respect of the execution of his most righteous law, as is the people, so is the prince; his word must be alike fulfilled in both; not only subjects that kill one another, but princes (be they kings or monarchs) that authorize murder, or suffer their subjects' blood to be unjustly spilt, by man shall their blood be spilt; if other executioners fail, even by the hand of their dearest friends, such was count Montgomery to this king.

5. The caveat which, from the untimely death of this earl—a judgment inflicted by Divine justice not so much for this, (though this were pretended by the queen mother and dowager to take away his life,) as

for other offences—hath been elsewhere commended to young gallants, or princes' servants, was (to my remembrance) this: Not to be instruments, though to kings, in the execution of manifest injustice; seeing this noble gentleman, after much honour, and many victories gotten by war, in defence of those of the reformed religion, whom he had formerly wronged, came at length to lose his head in that very place, whither, by Henry the Second's appointment, he had brought divers noble gentlemen to the fagot, and some of that honourable bench which afterward sentenced him to death.

CHAP. XXXIV. 270

The Sins of Parents visited upon their Children, according to the Rule of Retaliation.

1. All the parties hitherto instanced in were visited by the rule of retaliation in their own persons; some of them not in their own persons alone. But it is usual with the supreme Judge to visit the outcrying sins of irreligious parents upon their children, according to the former rule: and to this purpose the visitation of Ahab's and of Jezebel's bloody sins against Naboth, may, by express warrant of sacred writ[d], be improved. But no histories, profane or sacred, afford more fit instances for the proof of this conclusion than our own chronicles do. It was a question amongst the heathen philosophers, *An res posterorum pertineant ad defunctos:* "Whether the ill or welfare of posterity did any way increase or diminish the happiness of their deceased ancestors." The negative part is determined by the great philosopher in his morals; and I know no just cause or reason why any Christian

[d] See 1 Kings xxi. 24, and 2 Kings ix. 26, &c.

divine should either appeal from his determination or revive the doubt: yet if the affirmative part of the former question were supposed as true, or were it lawful to imagine or feign such interchange of speech or dialogues betwixt deceased grandfathers, uncles, and their nephews, as our Saviour, I take it, not by way of real history, but of fiction, doth between Abraham and Dives, methinks king Edward the Third and Lionel duke of Clarence might have taken up Jotham's parable against Bolingbroke and the house of Lancaster: 'If ye have dealt truly and sincerely with us, and with the prime stems of this royal stock, then rejoice ye and your posterity in your devices; but if not, let fire come out from among yourselves, or from our stock, to devour you, and to make your posterity curse your dealings with us.' And in what region soever Bolingbroke's soul did in the third generation reside, it might have framed its responsory unto this parable out of Adonibezek's song, *As I have done to you and yours, so hath the Lord requited me and mine:* and had this or the like saying (upon the deposition of Bolingbroke's heir) been daily rung into the ears of Edward the Fourth,

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum,

Amongst men, none more happy is than he
That can his own by other's harms foresee;

it might have wrought better effects for the bodily or temporal good of his harmless sons, than any dirge could, after his death, procure unto his soul. Few chronicles else will exhibit such a continued pedigree of unhallowed policy's ill success as our own annals of those times do.

2. Unto Richard the Second and his misleaders it seemed a branch of plausible policy to banish his

cousin (Henry of Bolingbroke) this land, the vicinity of whose heroical spirit was an heartsore to this degenerate prince. But what success did the counsel of the Lord award unto this jealous device? Bolingbroke, by his presence amongst foreign nations, (which scarce 271
knew him before,) gained so much honour, and so much love with the chief peers of this realm (which had known him before) by his absence, that Richard the Second was taken in his own fear, and his crown set upon Bolingbroke's head, with general applause. But the less right he had unto it, the greater was his jealousy lest Richard the Second, or some other more principal stem of the royal stock, might take it off again. The only means, as he thought, for securing himself from this fear, and for settling the crown upon the house of Lancaster, was to put the poor deposed king to death, whose errors deserved pity and compassion from every true English heart, if not for his grandfather's, yet for his heroical father's sake—that Gideon which had brought so much honour to the English nation. And after Richard's death, the masterpiece of his policy was to suffer Mortimer, the lawful heir unto the duke of Clarence, and now unto the English crown, to live a miserable captive under the enemy, who had more reason to revenge himself upon the English by Mortimer's death, than Bolingbroke had to murder Richard the Second. This foul sin of Bolingbroke was visited upon the third generation: his grandchild and heir, Henry the Sixth, a man more free from stain of guiltless blood than either Richard the Second or Bolingbroke had been, is cruelly murdered by Edward the Fourth, a stem of Mortimer's stock, and of Lionel duke of Clarence. For though God hath sworn not to punish the children for their fathers' offences, yet he hath professed it as a rule of

his eternal justice to visit the sins of fathers upon the children: and from the equity of this rule many princely races have utterly determined and expired in the days of such princes as were most free from the actual sins of their ancestors, which were the causes of their expiration, as is in other meditations shewed at large.

3. But though it were just with God to visit Bolingbroke's sin on Henry the Sixth, did Edward the Fourth commit no injustice by doing that which God would have done? Yes, he did therefore most unjustly, because he did do that which God would not have done by him; and therefore the counsel of the Lord, which overthrew the bloody devices of Bolingbroke for settling the crown of this kingdom on himself and his heirs male, did more speedily overthrow the device of Edward the Fourth. God visits his sin in the next generation upon his lovely and harmless sons in their nonage, before the devices of their hearts were capable of any evil or mischief towards men, and did visit them by the hands of their bloody uncle Richard the Third, who, by their father's appointment, had practised butchery upon the house of Lancaster, that he might become a more skilful slaughterman of the house of York. Thus did blood touch blood, and for a long time run in the blood of his royal race, until the issue was staunched by the blood of the cruel tyrant, slain in battle by Henry the Seventh. All these instances mentioned in this, with some others in the former chapters, will fall under another more useful consideration in the treatise of Prodigies, or Divine Forewarnings betokening blood.

CHAP. XXXV. 272

Grosser Sins visited upon God's Saints, according to the former Rule of Counterpassion.

1. As it is generally more safe to speak the truth of times past, than to open our mouths against the iniquity of times present; so, to trace the prints of Divine Providence in thus fitting punishments to men's enormities will be less offensive whilst this search is made abroad, than it would be, were it or the like made nearer hand or at home: yet were it well, and it might go much better with this land and people, if every ancient, every noble or private family, specially such as have had much dealings with other men, would make the like search within their own pale. Few families there be of greater note, but either have or might have had undoubted experience of some visitations upon them, according to the rule of counterpassion, within two or three descents. That most private men do not find experiments of this rule in themselves, this falls out for want of observation, or because they keep not a true register of their own doings or sufferings. No man can plead any personal exemption from this canon by reason of his righteousness or integrity; none can altogether secure his posterity, that some one or other of his sins shall not be visited upon them; nor can it justly be accounted any tax or prejudice unto any family, to undergo with patience that mulct which the righteous Judge hath laid upon them. To murmur or grudge at our own or others' visitation, whose welfare we wish or tender, is blameworthy with God and good men: and albeit this distemper be not (only) meritorious of death, yet is it this which for the most part brings a necessity

of dying upon such as have otherwise deserved death, whether bodily or spiritual. For no man, which with patience and humility acknowledgeth the equity or justice of his punishment as it proceeds from God, but will in some measure recall himself, or inhibit his progress in that sin, the smart of whose punishment he feels: and unto every degree of sincere revocation or repentance some degree of mitigation is awarded. The best means for instilling the spirit either of meekness or patience in suffering for offences past, or of fear to offend in the like kind again, will be to take the punishments or corrections of God's saints into serious consideration.

2. If for the manifestation of God's justice it must be done unto his dearest saints as they have done unto others, either whilst they themselves were his enemies, or made him their enemy, after their reconcilement had been wrought; what may they look for in the end, which still continue adversaries to the truth? David was a man after God's own heart, (excepting the case of Uriah,) yet not therefore free from disgrace, danger, or harm, after the prophet had solemnly denounced his pardon; *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* In respect of the adultery committed by Bathsheba, Absalom's offence agains this father David was much greater than David's had been against Uriah: the one was done in secret, the other in the open sun[e]. The
273 death, if not of Bathsheba's child, yet of his son Absalom, was more bitter unto David than his own death could have been. So much he confesseth himself, and testifies the truth of his confession with his tears: *And the king was moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son*

[e] 2 Sam. xvi. 21; xii. 12.

Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! 2 Sam. xviii. 33. So that here was more than a full retaliation, if we consider his offence as it had reference only unto Uriah. For one man's life is as much worth as another's, and Uriah lost but one life, David was to suffer the loss of two. Yet this is not all that the prophet had to say to him for his offence; for so he saith, 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10: *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house; because thou hast despised me, and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

3. But when it is said that *David was a man after God's own heart, excepting the matter of Uriah,* this exception includes, if not an interruption in the bond of grace, by which he had been entirely linked unto God's favour, yet some wound or breach in the estate of his wonted favour and liking with God. And no marvel if that sin which made this breach, and for a time removed the fence of God's favourable protection, were visited upon his person and upon his posterity. But are the sins which men commit whilst they are God's enemies thus visited upon any after their full admission into the estate and favour of God's sons, or whilst the bond of their reconciliation remains unwonted and entire? We do not read of any grosser sins committed by St. Paul after our Saviour had effectually called him. We may, without breach of charity, persuade ourselves that he was as free, from that time forward, from wronging any man, Jew or Gentile, as Samuel had been from wronging Israel. St. Stephen, at his death, prayed for him, not against him: but though he freely forgave him, yet will not

the righteous Judge suffer the wrongs which he had done unto this blessed martyr pass without some solemn remembrance. Those which stoned St. Stephen laid down their garments at Paul's feet[f]; and his willingness to take charge of them argues he was consenting to his death: so I think was not Barnabas. And for this reason we do not read that Barnabas was stoned, as Paul was, by the Jews which came from Antioch and Iconium unto Lystra and Derbe; albeit both had been alike offensive for preaching the gospel at Iconium, where the same violence[g] had been likewise jointly attempted against both. Upon the matter then betwixt St. Paul and St. Stephen, (albeit St. Stephen make himself no party,) this is the only difference; Stephen died by the hands of his persecutors, so did not Paul. Yet it seems the righteous Lord suffered these malignant Jews to do as much unto St. Paul as had been done by his consent unto St. Stephen, even as much as they themselves desired, which did despite him no less than their countrymen and brethren in iniquity had done St. Stephen; for they *drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe*, Acts xiv. 19, 20. Paul (we may conclude) was more extraordinarily preserved by God, not less rigorously dealt
274 withal by the Jews, than St. Stephen had been. That he was extraordinarily preserved we have reason to believe, because he was appointed to be a pattern of

[f] St. Paul acknowledgeth his consent unto St. Stephen's death, either as expressly given by him, or as included in his willingness to keep the garments of such as stoned him to death, Acts xxii. 20: *And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.*

[g] Acts xiv. 5, 6.

suffering more violence than this from the time of his calling. That he was appointed to be a pattern of suffering evils we must believe, because God himself doth expressly testify as much at the time of his calling, unto Ananias, who was to ratify his calling so far as the notice of it concerned the visible church. For when Ananias did demur upon his admission into the church, *the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake,* Acts ix. 15, 16. And yet (perhaps) St. Paul had not been made such a spectacle to the world of sufferance or persecutions, unless he had persecuted more than St. Stephen; unless he had made havock of the church.

4. It is not probable that these Jews had any mind to punish Paul for his offence against St. Stephen, of which, if they had any notice or remembrance, this would have made them more ready to pardon him for preaching the gospel at this time, than to put him to death for persecuting such as had preached it before. Their resolution to stone him at this time, rather than beat him with rods, as their usual manner was, argues that their wills, though otherwise free (more than enough) to do mischief, were, by the all-seeing Providence, determined or guided in the manner of practising mischief. To say, the Author of being and Fountain of goodness did instil this spirit of fury and malice into the hearts of these Jews, or did by any decree absolutely necessitate them to conceive so full a measure of mischief as now possessed them, were (I take it) to swerve from the *form of wholesome words,* and would give some advantage to the adversaries of truth. It was Satan and themselves which had charged

their breasts with this extraordinary measure of fury and malice: but these being so overcharged, as that without some vent or other they were ready to burst, He, who is as well the supreme Moderator of men's thoughts and resolutions, as Judge of their actions, did not only permit or suffer, but direct, appoint, and order, that they should exonerate or discharge their furious malice upon St. Paul, not upon Barnabas; and upon St. Paul by that peculiar kind of violence which now they practise, rather than by any other unto which they were more accustomed.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Of Sins visited or punished according to the Circumstance of Time or Place wherein they were committed.

1. It may be, the circumstance of the time wherein this visitation happened to St. Paul might suggest as much as we have observed unto himself, or unto others then living, whom the remembrance or notice of his former trespasses might concern. But however it were in this particular, the identity, whether of the time or of the place, wherein men have done, and afterwards suffer extraordinary evil, are, in their nature, better remembrancers of God's justice than the exact identity or likeness of the evils which they have done
275 to others, and from others suffer, is. If a man should meet with mischief in the same place, or be overtaken by it on the same day, wherein he had done the like mischief unto others, the event would naturally argue a legal and formal process of divine justice, calling time and place (which are always witnesses of actions done in greatest secresy) to give special evidence against him, and to make his own conscience confess that which all the world besides were not able to prove.

Some, within our memories, have concluded their unseasonable sportings with death, sudden and casual in respect of men, upon the same day, after revolution of times, wherein they had deserved or cunningly avoided the sentence of death, being more than due unto them, if justice might have had its natural course; and it might peradventure have gone better with them, if they had hid themselves for that day in the house of mourning, or not adventured upon the house of mirth, or fields of sport.

2. To particularize in, or comment upon, domestic modern examples, would be offensive: *Beatus populus qui scit jubilationem:* "That people or family is happy which knows the times and seasons of rejoicing and mirth; but more happy are they which know the times and seasons of mourning, or for preventing the day of visitation." And the best means to foresee or prevent it, would be to keep an exact calendar of our own and of our forefathers' sins; for these we are bound to confess with our own. And if we would unpartially judge ourselves for both, by unfeigned repentance and hearty contrition, we might escape the judgments of God, which by our neglect hang over us, and without amendment will fall upon us. It is a saying among the later Jews, *Volvitur meritum in diem meriti:* "Though punishments do not immediately pursue the fact which deserves it, nor instantly overtake the party which committed such fact, yet it resteth not, but rolls about, until it meet with them or their posterity at the same point of time, wherein it was deserved."

The temple, by their calculation, was twice destroyed upon the same day of the same month upon which Moses had broken the tables: though so it were *de facto*, yet this revolution infers not this destruction to be fatal. It might have been at both times prevented,

had that generation wherein it happened been as zealous of God's glory as Moses had been, or had they held idolatry or hypocrisy in as great detestation as Moses had done. Some foreign writers[h] have observed, that the hope of this land whilst he lived, Edward the Sixth, did die upon the selfsame day (after revolution of some years) in which his father had put sir Thomas More to death, a man otherwise faulty, yet so true a pattern of moral justice, as it cannot seem strange if the righteous Judge did take special notice of king Henry's dealing with him, and insert the day of his death in his everlasting calendar, to be after signed with the untimely death of king Henry's only son. How the sins of parents are often punished in their harmless or less harmful posterity, is elsewhere discussed. I will not interrupt this discourse with any digression concerning divine equity in this point, nor with any apology for these curious observations, as some enstyle them: I relate only matters of fact, or punishments answerable to offences, as well for the circumstance of place as of time.

3. Pausanias[i], a famous antiquary, or, to describe him better to a mere English reader, the Camden of
276 Greece, hath observed as much as now we do in his narrations of the wars between the Romans and the Corinthians, or Achaians, managed by Metellus and Critolaus. The history, though brief, (as being but an appendix of his intended topography,) is fraught with many remarkable circumstances, pointing out unto us a divine providence; of which, two (concerning the selected band of Arcadia put to flight, but with more honour than the rest of Critolaus' army) are more specially parallel to the rule of retaliation. These Arcadians, after the foil, retired safe (to the

[h] Vide Thuanum. [i] Pausanias in Achaic. lib. 7. p. 425.

number of a thousand) unto Elatea, a city of the Phocenses, where they found good welcome at the first, upon some terms of ancient confederacy or alliance: but the sudden noise of Critolaus' and his company's overthrow dissolved the links of former amity. The poor Arcadians were commanded by the state of Phocis forthwith to relinquish Elatea; and in their return to Peloponnesus, meeting unexpectedly with Metellus' forces, were all slain by the Romans in the selfsame place in which their fore-elders had forsaken the Grecian leaguers or confederates against Philip of Macedon. Honest countrymen see meteors or other appearances as perfectly as philosophers do, but they often err in guessing at the place or subject wherein the appearance is made: thus, many imagine the sun to be reddish in a foggy morning, whenas the redness is in the air. So did this heathen antiquary expressly and fully discern the power of divine justice in this event, from the circumstance of the persons, (a race of trucebreakers,) and from the place of their discomfiture. His eyesight or apprehension herein was as clear as any Christian's. Wherein then consists his error? In attributing this award of Divine Justice unto the gods of Greece. But did any soothsayer of Greece foretell that the fathers' breach of truce should be thus visited upon their children, as Elias foretold that the dogs should lap Ahab's blood, and eat Jezebel and their children's flesh, in the same place where they had lapped the blood of Naboth, whom Jezebel had caused to be stoned to death? The identity of justice done upon divers people and nations rightly argues that the God of Israel did then rule, and *execute judgment unto the ends of the world,* although *he did not deal so with any nation as he did with Israel; neither had the heathen knowledge of his laws,* much less

such distinct foreknowledge of his judgments or visitations as was usual in Israel, unless it were in some cases extraordinary.

4. To have seen with our eyes what we have read in a faithful and judicious historian[k], one to die in a fit of the falling sickness, or (as it was then presumed) to be vexed to death by an evil spirit, at the time appointed for his consecration, even whilst he did prostrate himself before the altar to receive the Holy Ghost by the imposition of his metropolitan's hands, would have moved the like question to that of Christ's disciples concerning him that was born blind; *Lord, who did sin, this man or his parents?* Whose shame did he foam out with his last breath, his own, or some other's? Such as is here expressed was the fate of Strachyquaz, son to Boleslaus the First, and brother to Boleslaus the Second, king of Boheme, who, with the bishop of Mentz, was an eyewitness of this prodigious, fearful accident. And if consecration dinners were then in use, (as doubtless they were, when kings' sons and brothers thought it no scorn to be consecrated bishops,) *respondent ultima primis;* Strachyquaz did better brook his name after his death than at his birth
277 or baptism, or (as my author speaks) on his lustration day: the reality, answering to his name, and portended by it, he left behind him. The dinner provided was indeed *terribile convivium*, a banquet of dread or horror to all spectators; a feast, of whose dainties few (I think) would eat. And thus much doth the name Strachyquaz, in the Bohemian language, import; a name imposed upon this unfortunate person at his birth, in triumphant memory of that bloody banquet unto which his father, Boleslaus the First, had invited Wenceslaus the king, his eldest brother, with intent

[k] Dubravius in Histor. Bohem.

to murder him, as he did; taking opportunity to accomplish this impiety in the temple of God, where this king (afterwards sainted) was at his midnight's devotions.

5. To sit as coroners upon the souls of men deceased, is a thing which I have ever misliked, though sometimes practised by men otherwise of deserved esteem. And whosoever in this case will take upon him to sit as judge, my request shall be not to serve upon the jury: yet if my opinion were in this particular demanded, Whether this man dying (as the story presumes) of a devil, the manner of his death were any certain prognostic, or probable presumption, of his damnation? my verdict should go, *in mitiorem partem*, That thus to die of a devil, unless his former life had been devilish, (which the history no way intimates,) doth no more argue his damnation, than the untimely death of Jeroboam's child did argue him to have been guilty of his parent's actual sins; in the manner of whose death, notwithstanding, as well as in Strachyquaz's tragical end, the sins of their parents were remarkably visited, according to that rule of justice which now we treat of, that is, by way of counterpassion, in respect, if not of time, yet of the places wherein they were visited. That Jeroboam's child died in God's favour the text instructs us, 1 Kings xiv. 13: *All Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel*, &c.

6. But to return to Strachyquaz; the manner of whose death (as is apparent) was more fearful and prodigious, yet no sign of damnation. For as there is *vates præteritorum et futurorum*, "a branch of prophecy in discovering times past as well as events to

come;" so there may be, and ofttimes are, prodigious and portentous accidents which point at nothing *de futuro, sed a retro;* "which look backwards, not forwards." The best use or signification of this fearful disaster was to advertise the present generation, and their successors, that the execrable and sacrilegious murder committed by Boleslaus, father to Strachyquaz, was not expiated as yet, but to be visited upon more generations, without hearty repentance and confession of this wicked usurper's and his complices' sins, wherewith the land of Boheme had been polluted. The first-born of Egypt were slain for their fathers' offences against the infant males of the Hebrews; and Strachyquaz died this fearful death by the visitation of his father's sins upon him. But he might (perhaps) have lived much longer, and have died in peace, had he lived according to that rule whose profession he had taken upon him; that is, if he had continued (as he once resolved to do) a true penitentiary, and not affected to be a prelate. For if God would not suffer his temple to be built by David (a man otherwise after his own heart) only because he had been a man of war, we may, from the moral analogy of this sacred emblem, collect that the same holy Lord would not suffer the
278 son of that malignant cruel pagan fratricide, which had imbrued his hands in the blood of his priests, and murdered his anointed king in the holy place, to bear rule over his house or church. This his unseasonable ambitious humour, without any other actual remarkable crime, might in divine justice exact some print of the supreme Judge's indignation. All this notwithstanding being granted doth not prove there was no good thing found in the party that was thus punished, as well as in Jeroboam's child. It was a favour to the one that he died in peace, though in

his infancy; and it might be some matter of honour or favour to the other, that he had Christian burial in the church wherein he died, and that he was not made a prey to the fowls of the air. But this we speak sceptic-wise: what became of Strachyquaz after his fearful end we leave it for the eternal Judge to determine.

7. Whatsoever became of him, the death of his grandmother Drahomira was much more terrible: as she had lived, so she died, a malicious, blasphemous pagan, a cruel, bloody stepdame to Christ's infant church in that kingdom. The story (I know) will unto many seem strange, yet in my observation very capable of credit, if we consider the exigence of those times, and the then desperate state of Boheme. Christianity and paganism lay then at stake, whether should be entertained, whether expelled: the pagans, by their unconscionable policy, (which aims at nothing but some private end, always ready to hazard whatsoever lies within their level rather than miss of it,) had so cunningly played the foregame, and by their bloody plots removed so many principal men out of the way, that there was no possibility left, save only in the Almighty's immediate hand, to make any thing of the aftergame. Now in case of such desperate extremities, (specially when they happen during the infancy of any particular church,) it cannot to me seem incredible, if the good Spirit of God do outvie those prodigious cruelties which Satan deviseth against the saints, by sudden miraculous executions upon their actors, Satan's instruments. The tragedy of Drahomira was briefly thus: this queen mother had animated her pagan son, Boleslaus, surnamed Sævus the Cruel, to murder his elder brother and liege lord Wenceslaus, only because he had approved himself a zealous professor of the doctrine of

life. To terrify others from taking the sacred function upon them, she caused the bodies of those priests and prelates whom Boleslaus had massacred to lie unburied, and one Podivivus[k], a man of principal
279 note in his time, to hang two entire years upon the gallows. Upon these and many like provocations of God's just vengeance, her grave was made before she felt herself sick; her burial like to that of Corah, of Dathan, and Abiram. Whether this opening of the earth were truly miraculous, or whether it happened in the period of some natural declination, (the supporters or pillars of it being digged up or undermined before,) the opening of it at that time wherein this wicked woman was to pass over that very place in

[k] Intra breve igitur tempus vaticinium divi Wenceslai completum fuit, vaticinantis, fore ut a discessu suo, atrium Pauli presbyteri sacerdotibus vacuum redderetur. Correptus inter precipuos ad supplicium, Podivivus quoque totum biennium in furca sub dio pendens, nulla tabe violari, nedum corrumpi, conficique potuit, donec post haustam terræ hiatu Drahomiram, sepeliretur. Nam quo manifestior, graviorque pœna appareret, quæ merito de crudelissima atque impiissima muliere exigenda fuerat; eo loci, quo adhuc insepulta jacebant ossa occisorum sacerdotum, terra sua sponte dehiscens, vivam Drahomiram, una cum curru et qui simul vehebantur, absorbuit, auriga solo incolumi, qui ad aram juxta sitam (nunc haud extat) equo desiliens, accurrit, cum forte tintinnabulum tinnire audisset, ut corpus Domini adoraret, execrante illum Drahomira omnibus maledictis. Quare locum eum etiamnum, ut execratum funestumque declinant viatores, qui arcem pragensem ab occidentali plaga petunt. Quanquam terra eodem loci in statum pristinum cohæserit. Puniti et illi divinitus, qui Boleslaum assectati, gladios etiam suos adversus divum Wenceslaum strinxerunt. Pars enim eorum mente alienata, in rabiemque versa præcipites ex alto deorsum se dabant: quidam in eos gladios, quos nudaverant, incubuere. Ad hæc templi paries, quem prope occisus fuit divus Wenceslaus, velut cædis, ipse quoque conscius, aut potius, ut testis foret sceleris sempiterni, nulla ullius opera abstergi, eluique potuit a cruore, quo respersus ex corpore divi Wenceslai fuerat. Hæc tandem tot prodigia, tamque varia supplicia, Boleslaum exterruerunt, ut mitius deinceps cum Christianis agere, sævitiamque suam adversus illos remittere inciperet.—Dubravius in Histor. Bohem. lib. 5. pag. (40.) 34.

which she had caused the priests' bodies to lie unburied, was the Lord's doing, and no less wonderful to Christian eyes, than if it had been (as perhaps it was) a mere miracle. The truth of this story wanted not the testimony of many ages; for passengers, from the day of her death until the day wherein mine author wrote this story, (which was within this age current,) eschewed the place wherein she died, as execrable, and accursed by God.

CHAP. XXXVII.

What manner of Sins they be which usually provoke God's Judgments according to the Rule of Counterpassion: and of the Frequency of this Kind of Punishment foresignified by God's Prophets.

1. JUSTICE, as was intimated before, doth not formally consist in retaliation, and yet is retaliation a formal part or branch of justice; and of this branch Nemesis amongst the heathen was the ordinary arbitress: she was in their divinity a goddess of justice, not justice herself, nor did every wrong[1] (in their opinion) belong unto her cognizance, but such insolent wrongs only as deserved vengeance or indignation. Nor doth the righteous most merciful Lord and only God usually punish ordinary or private, but public and outcrying sins, by the severe law or rule of counterpassion. And it is observable, that most prophecies which are poured out against any land, city, or people with fuller indignation, are so interningled with threats of judgment, by way of counterpassion, that the quality and circumstances of the crimes may seem to serve the prophets as glasses for representing the nature and quality of the

[1] See the treatise of the Original of Atheism and Idolatry, chap. 17. parag. 10.

judgments to come: and if the crimes were as well known to men as the judgments are, we would think the one were moulded in the other. This exact proportion betwixt the pattern of sins which Babylon had set, and the manner of God's judgments upon her for them, hath been observed before[m], and I will not make the prophecies concerning her destruction any part of this observation. The prophecies concerning other nations and cities will afford plenty of instances to this purpose.

2. Samaria shall be *as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof. And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burnt with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot,* Micah i. 6, 7. The wound of Samaria, as the prophet adds, verse 9, was incurable, but so was not the wound of Judah as yet, although it was come to Judah by infection, and had touched at the very
280 gates of Jerusalem. For so he saith, verse 12, *The inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good: but evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem.* Thither it came, but it found no entrance in for the present, as it did into the gates of other cities of Judah. Lachish, of all the cities of Judah, was the first which took the impression of Israel's idolatry, and did in part derive it unto Sion: and as she was the first and principal in sin, so she was the first in the plagues here threatened. The chariots of Asshur did first triumph in her streets, and her inhabitants felt the dint of the Assyrian swords, when Jerusalem[n]

[m] Chap. 26. [n] 2 Kings xviii. 15, 17. Isa. xxxvi. 2; xxxvii. 23.

escaped with the lash of Rabshakeh's tongue. That which is afterwards related in the sacred story concerning Jerusalem's defence against Sennacherib, (who had surprised most of the strong cities of Judah, and had made Lachish his seat of residence,) was significantly charactered by the prophet Micah in the place forecited, *Evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem*, but it entered into the gates of Lachish: for so he adds; *O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast: she is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.* Mic. i. 13. *They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall:* Hosea iv. 13, 14.

3. The children of Ammon, of Moab, and Edom did triumph more than other nations in the day of Judah's heavy visitation by Nebuchadnezzar; and for this cause they have an heavier doom read by God's prophets, which lived at that time, than other nations had, Ezekiel xxv. 2—14: *Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites: Hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God; Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity; behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they*

shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk. And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the Lord. For thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with thy feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel; behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord God; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen; therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim, unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations. And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord God; Because that Edom
281 *hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; therefore thus saith the Lord, I will also stretch out my hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword. And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my*

fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord God.

4. The doom of Moab is more particularly set forth by Jeremiah, chap. xlviii. 2: *There shall be no more praise of Moab: in Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from being a nation.* (So Moab had said of Israel.) *Also thou shalt be cut down, O madmen; the sword shall pursue thee.* And again, vv. 25—27: *The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord. Make ye him drunken: for he magnified himself against the Lord: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision. For was not Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy.*

The like doom of Moab is foretold by Zephaniah, chap. ii. 8—11: *I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border. Therefore as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them. This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.* So far wide were Moab and Edom in their divinations, when they said, *The house of Judah is like unto all the heathen,* Ezek. xxv. 8, that all the isles of the Gentiles were to become such as the house

of Judah had been, that is; professed worshippers of the true God, who had now appointed to make himself known to all the world by his judgments upon these proud heathens, which for their blasphemies have now forfeited their national interest in this blessing here promised to the isles of the Gentiles, for they ceased to be nations.

5. Whiles God's plagues are thus fitly suited to the matter or manner of men's sins, the longer the punishments themselves are delayed the surer document they may afford unto the observant that there is a watchful eye of an all-seeing Providence, without whose presence no fact can be committed; an attentive ear which never shuts, always ready, always able to take notice of every word that can be spoken, and to register proud blasphemous boastings in the indelible characters of an everlasting book. It is an observation worth the noting which a learned commentator hath made upon the place last cited out of Zephaniah, *Verbum* Audivi *suam emphasim habet*, "These words, *I have heard*, are emphatical;" they intimate as much unto us, as if, in the name of the Lord, the prophet had said, "Though Moab saw not me, yet I heard him (for I was present with him) when he pronounced the coast of Israel waste. And what I heard I cannot forget, nor will I forgive; according to his intentions against Israel at the time appointed will I do to him."

282 6. The cries of Edom against Jerusalem, when Jerusalem was drowned with her children's tears, (which yet could not quench the fire then kindled in her palaces,) were more bitter than the cry of Edom and Ammon against Judah had been, *Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.* The scope at which their wishes did aim was, that Jerusalem and the temple might so be demolished, that they should never

be raised again. And according to this scantling of their malicious wish, the Psalmist proportions that imprecation against Edom which in the issue proved a prophecy: *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it,* &c. The more full expression or ratification of this implicit prophecy we have in another prophet, who lived about eighty years after the Edomites had uttered that accursed cry against Jerusalem: *I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever,* Malachi i. 2—4. Some good expositors have from the literal sense of this place collected, that Edom, not long after the Babylonish captivity, did utterly cease to be a nation; and whether any of Esau's posterity be left upon the face of the earth some have questioned, and (to my remembrance) determined for the negative. These (whatsoever besides) were the effects of God's professed hate to Esau. But there is a seed or nation yet on earth which shall at the time appointed be made partakers of his blessing, so often promised to Jerusalem, and enjoy the fruits of his professed love to Jacob.

7. These prophetical passages concerning Ammon, Moab, and Edom, afford many useful speculations, did either these times afford us freedom, or this place opportunity to dilate upon them. But leaving the rest unto the judicious reader's own collection, out of the

several expositors of the places by me quoted, I shall only request him to take this one admonition from me: 'Not to rejoice, much less to triumph in any other's calamity, although he knew it to be the special award of Divine justice, or a condign punishment, purposely suited by the all-seeing Providence to some peculiar sin.' Edom and Babylon knew that Jerusalem and Judah were justly punished for their offences against the righteous Lord, and themselves to be the appointed executioners of his justice; yet all this doth no way excuse them for their presumption in the manner of execution. *My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray*, &c. *All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* Yet all this acquits not Babylon from guilt of God's judgments in spoiling God's people: for so it follows; *Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks*, Jer. l. 6—8. And again, vv. 10, 11: *Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord. Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage.* Not only the practice or real intention of mischief, but the delight or joy which men take in the calamity of others, by whomsoever it be procured or intended,
283 doth make men liable to the rule of retaliation. For every degree of delight or joy in others' misery includes a breach of that fundamental law of equity, *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris;* "Whatsoever we would not have done unto ourselves, we should be unwilling to do or to see done unto others." And all visitation by the rule of counterpassion, as it concerns

wrongs intended or done by one man to another, is but a resarcination or making up of that breach which hath been made in the fundamental law of equity, that is, of doing as we would be done unto.

8. But besides the wrongs which potentates or private men practise upon or intend to others, there is a peculiar disposition which makes men liable to the judgments which they fear, or at least hasten the execution of judgments otherwise deserved; and that is, a tempting God by the curiosity of superstitious fear, or by dissimulation. An instance to this purpose (and that is all which at this time I mean to use) we have in Jeroboam[o] and his wife, who went disguised unto the prophet Ahijah, (as if it had been unto some cunning man,) to know what should become of her young son Abijah, then visited with sickness. The doom or punishment doth so well befit the temptation, that the circumstances of the time and place, &c. wherein the discovery of her dissembling was by the Spirit revealed unto the prophet, may seem to have suggested unto him the time of the child's death, with other circumstances. The prophet's eyes were dim, that he could not discern her by sight, but the Lord so supplied this defect, that he knew her by the sound of her feet before she came in at the door. [p] *The Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she will feign herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent unto thee with heavy tidings,* &c. *Arise thou therefore, get thee to*

o 1 Kings xiv. 1, 2. p Ver. 5, &c.

thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die, &c. *And Jeroboam's*[q] *wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died.* But of that peculiar branch of Divine Providence which takes men in the nets of their own superstitious fear or imaginations, we shall have fitter occasion to speak in the treatise of Prodigies, or Divine Forewarnings.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Conclusion of this Treatise, with the Relation of God's remarkable Judgments manifested in Hungary.

1. DID God always fit his plagues to exorbitant or outcrying sins immediately after their commission, men would suspect that he did distrust his memory. Should he defer all as long as he doth sundry, for many years, and some special ones till the second, third, or fourth generation, this would tempt us in the interim to think he took just notice of none: *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the children of men is fully set in them to do evil,* Eccles. viii. 11. But the same preacher, to counterpoise the sway of this inbred temptation, addeth,
284 *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and God prolongeth his days, yet I know that it shall be well with them that fear the Lord, and do reverence before him. But it shall not be so well to the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, he shall be like a shadow; because he feareth not before God.* vv. 12, 13. Besides this authority of the preacher, (concerning the determinate extent or meaning of whose words I will not here dispute,) we have a prophetical general rule, which

[q] 1 Kings xiv. 17.

never faileth in itself nor to the apprehension of the observant. How mightily soever iniquity abounds in any city, land, or country, *yet the just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity. Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.* Zeph. iii. 5.

2. But these sacred as well as other maxims have their peculiar subjects, in which they are more remarkably verified at one time than at another. The extraordinary documents of God's punitive justice had been, no doubt, more rife in Judah about Zephaniah's time than in former ages. And amongst modern Christian states none have been so fertile as the kingdom of Hungary, since it stood upon the same terms with the Turk that Judah in Zephaniah's days did with the Chaldæan. I will give the reader only a hint or taste from one or two particulars, to set his meditations (if it shall please him) on working, to observe the like out of the histories of that country.

3. Amongst all the persons of better place or fame, mentioned in those histories, could there be found but ten (as for aught I know there may be more) whose legends, either in respect of wrongs done to others by them, or of wrongs done to them by others, might afford so many pregnant proofs of Divine retaliation as doth the legend of friar George, or (as Thuanus calls him) Martinusius, the prophet's proposition, *Every morning he bringeth forth judgment to light*, might by exact logical induction be proved to have been universally true in that kingdom for more than ten years together. This man by his valorous wit had advanced himself from a turnspit, or coalcarrier, to be a cardinal; otherwise, for his temporal dignity and authority, full peer to most princes of Christendom, no way inferior to many kings, save only in want of royal title. In the height of his

prosperity he had entertained one Marc Anthony de Ferraro, secretary to Castaldie, lieutenant to Ferdinand the emperor in those parts, as a secret intelligencer to betray his master, but was in the end miserably betrayed by him. For this assassinate, Ferrarius[r], having at all hours free access upon this hope, took hence opportunity to convey the rest of the bloody actors into the bedchamber of this usually well guarded prince or tyrant, in a dismal morning, before he was dressed; Ferrary himself giving the first wound whilst he was reaching pen and ink to subscribe unto the counterfeit letters or patents which he then did tender him. This friar or cardinal, Martinusius, had played the hypocrite (as was then presumed) with his Christian neighbours, being, either in affection to his own country, or for his private ends, more engaged to the Turk. And captain Lopez, with the Spanish arquebuses, designed by Ferdinand and Castaldie to assist marquis Pallavicino for effecting this plot, were permitted without suspicion of hostility into the castle, being appareled in Turkish weeds or long gowns, under which they covered their arquebuses and such other armour as they thought expedient for this feat.

4. His death, though bloody and cruel in the highest degree, did not so deeply affect unpartial hearts, either with pity toward him, or with indignation at his murderers, as the strange and unusual neglect of his mangled corpse[s] did their hearts, which, either through

[r] Hac vero arte conjurati in Georgii cubiculum irruperunt: Marcus Antonius Ferrarius Castaldo, ab epistolis homo prostitutæ audaciæ, jam ab aliquo tempore tantam cum Georgio familiaritatem contraxerat, dum se herum prodere simulat, ut cubiculariis ejus propterea factus notior, quavis hora ad ipsum admitteretur. — Thuanus, lib. 9. cap. 6

[s] "And so this assembly was discomfited, every man taking his nearest and safest way, leaving their master's dead body to be a prey and spoil unburied. It remained there many days

partiality or credulity, have professed a delectation of his tyrannical life upon higher terms than he deserved. His enemies, it seems, were so careful to effect their intended plot, and his friends so affrighted with his sudden disaster, that his dead body remained many days together above ground, unburied or uncovered, with the blood frozen upon it; so stiff with cold that it might rather seem to have been a blurred or besmeared statue of stone or marble than a dead man. A fit relic for a sacrilegious palace: such was the castle wherein he was murdered, for whose erection he had demolished an ancient church and monastery of religious persons. And whether it were that indignation [t] doth sometimes make men as well pieces of prophets as of poets, or whether it were spoken by way of bitter imprecation, the abbot [u], upon the sacrilegious oppression, did foresignify, that this castle, whose foundations were laid with others', should at length be seasoned with the blood of him that built it:

> Who buildeth so, methinks, so buildeth he,
> As if his house should his sepulchre be.

above ground naked, and without light, there being not any who respected to cover or bury him, being so stiff with cold, that he seemed as a man made out of marble, having in his head, breast, and arms, many wounds, upon which was yet remaining the blood all frozen; which, to say truly, was an object worthy of compassion: and on the other side it was execrable and enormous, to see so great a personage so vilely left without burial by those who (God knows for what cause) had practised his death."—Martin Fumee in his History of Hungary, book 4.

[t] Si natura negat, facit indignatio versum.

[u] "Behold now the end of the proudest and insolentest man in the world, and the greatest and closest tyrant that ever lived; God permitting that he should in that very place end his days, which he had caused to be built upon the foundations of an ancient church and monastery of religious persons, which for that occasion he caused to be defaced and pulled down; and for the ruin whereof his death was foretold unto him by the abbot of that place."—See the History of Hungary in the place forecited. —See Thuanus, lib. 9. cap. 6.

5. Though God's judgments upon this man were (as all his are) most just, yet were they unjustly done by these assassinates; they were God's instruments, but the devil's agents in acting this plot: and by doing to this cardinal as he had done to others, they themselves become liable in this life to the rigour of the indispensable law—as they have done to him, so must it be done to them. God's will is fulfilled upon them, as the devil's will was fulfilled by them. He was a murderer from the beginning, and they are his sons; and though they afterwards disperse themselves throughout divers kingdoms or nations, yet the cry of this cardinal's blood doth still pursue them: which way soever they wander, the Almighty's net is spread out for them; and being still hunted after by God's judgments all of them are driven at length into it. "This we are sure of," (saith the forementioned author of the Hungarian history,) "that all those which were actors of his death, in time, fell into great misfortunes. The marquis Sforce, within a while after, was overthrown and taken prisoner by the Turks, who inflicted great torments upon him. Captain Monin was beheaded at St. Germano in Piedmont. Marc Anthony Ferraro, in anno 1557, (which was about six years after,) was also beheaded in Alexandria (his native country) by the cardinal of Trent's command. Another was quartered by the Frenchmen in Provence. Chevalier Campegio, in anno 1562, was in the pre-
286 sence of the emperor Ferdinand mortally wounded with a boar in Bohemia." Thuanus[x] relates the self-

[x] Certe percussores Georgii post ejus necem ad unum omnes pœnas dedisse plerique scripserunt: ac Sfortiam quidem diuturna et morte pejore apud Turcos captivitate. Moninum vero in subalpina regione ad Germani fanum cervice abscissa; Ferrarium denique qui Alexandriæ, quæ ipsi patria erat, cardinalis Tridentini jussu sexennio post securi percussus est. Postremo

same accidents from the testimonies of more writers than this, save only that he omits the mention of him that was quartered in Provence.

6. What one of many hundred mornings after this fact was there wherein Ferdinand did not lose footing either in Hungary or in Transylvania; wherein the Turk did not sensibly encroach upon Christendom, and gain advantage against Christians? The just comparison between the misery of Judah in Zedekiah's days, and of Hungary under Lewis the Second, with the parallel manner of these two noble kings' and their adherents' miscarriage, must be referred, for brevity's sake, to other treatises: only, to shut up this exemplification of the prophet's assertion, verified in peculiar sort in Hungary, what example of divine justice, either more pregnant or more durable, was ever manifested in Judæa, than was to be seen every morning, for more than twenty years together, in the fields of Moacz, where the horse and his royal rider (king Lewis) found a miserable grave before they were quite dead; but where the bones of such as were slain in that unfortunate battle lay unburied in such an abundance as did exhibit a woful spectacle to every Christian passenger's eye, from the year 1526 until the time of Busbequius's[y] embassage to Constantinople, (how long after I know not,) which was upon the marriage between king Philip and queen Mary, about the year 1555. The Christian Hungars of those times, after the loss of their late mentioned king, had as just cause to insert

equitem Campegium, qui hujus sæculi anno 62. inter venandum in Ferdinandi ipsius conspectu apri fulmineo dente in Bohemia discerptus est, honestiori, nec tamen minus infortuna morte.—Thuanus, lib. 9. cap. 6.

satis eum docent superiorum temporum exempla, acceptæ ad Nicopolim, et ad Varnam clades, albentesque adhuc ossibus cæsorum Christianorum ad Mohaczum campi.—Busbeq. epist. 4. pag. 261.

[y] Quid ex eo sperandum sit,

that lamentation into their liturgy as Jeremiah had to take it up—*The anointed of the Lord was taken in their nets, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall be preserved alive among the heathen,* Lam. iv. 20; as full an interest in that complaint of the psalmist as the ancient Jews had during the time of Nebuchadnezzar or Antiochus's rage—*The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth; their blood have they shed like water, and there was none to bury them.* Psalm lxxix. 2, 3. The pitiful women of Judæa did eat their children when Titus besieged Jerusalem; the women of Hungary, no less merciful (as may be presumed) than other Christian women are, buried their children alive, lest their timorous outcries might bewray the place of their abode or latitation, when Solyman and his furious hell-hounds did so greedily hunt after their lives. The people of Hungary would not take example from the miseries which had befallen Judæa, nor break off those sins which brought this misery upon them: God grant the prophets and seers of this kingdom eyes to discern, and this whole people, one and other, patient hearts to hear those sins, whether of practice or opinion, discovered, which threaten the like judgments unto this land as have befallen the kingdom of Hungary, one of the most flourishing kingdoms in the Christian world within a few years before its ruin!

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